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THE WORKS

OF

J.-B. P. MOLIERE

VOLUME V

DON JUAN
LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR
THE MISANTHROPE

THE EDITION

COMÉDIE FRANÇAISE

ON JAPAN VELLUM PAPER

LIMITED TO TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY COPIES

No. 51

JACQUES LEMAN

THE

WORKS

OF

MOLIERE

DON JUAN;

OR, THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE

ACT II. SCENE V.

JACQUES LEMAN, PAINTER. GERY BICHARD, ETCHER.

DON JUAN BETWEEN MATHURINE AND CHARLOTTE, IN ITALIAN COSTUMES.

CHARLOTTE (*To D. Juan*): "WHAT IS IT MATHURINE WANTS WITH YOU?"

DON JUAN (*Aside to Charlotte*): "SHE IS JEALOUS OF MY SPEAKING TO YOU, AND WOULD LIKE ME TO MARRY HER; BUT I TELL HER IT IS YOU WHOM I WISH TO HAVE."

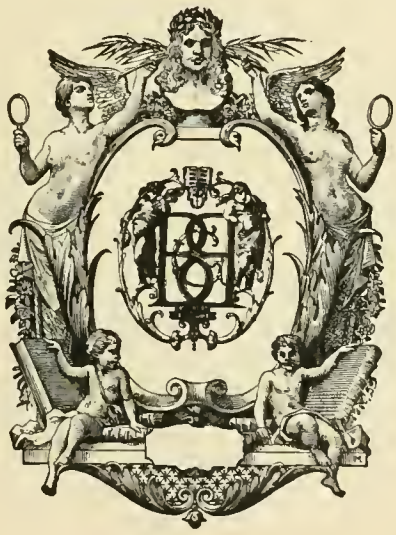
IN THE BACKGROUND, SGANARELLE, CERTAIN THAT HIS MASTER IS FOOLING THE POOR GIRLS. IN THE DISTANCE THE SEA-SHORE, AND, ON A ROCKY HEADLAND, A SICILIAN CASTLE.

THE WORKS OF MOLIERE

ILLUSTRATIONS

BY

MM. LOUIS LELOIR MAURICE LELOIR JACQUES LEMAN
EDMOND HEDOUIN



PARIS

CHEZ BARRIE FRERES, ÉDITEURS

RUE SCRIBE, 19

PHILADELPHIA: GEORGE BARRIE & SON

DON JUAN;

OR, THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

AN OBLONG CARTOUCHE ACCOMPANIED BY TWO CANDLESTICKS ON BRACKETS SUPPORTED BY MELANCHOLY HEADS OF CHARLOTTE AND MATHURINE. ABOVE THE CENTRE OF THE CARTOUCHE STANDS DON JUAN IN THE COSTUME OF A CAVALIER, HOLDING HIS GLOVES IN HIS RIGHT HAND AND HIS CANE IN THE OTHER.

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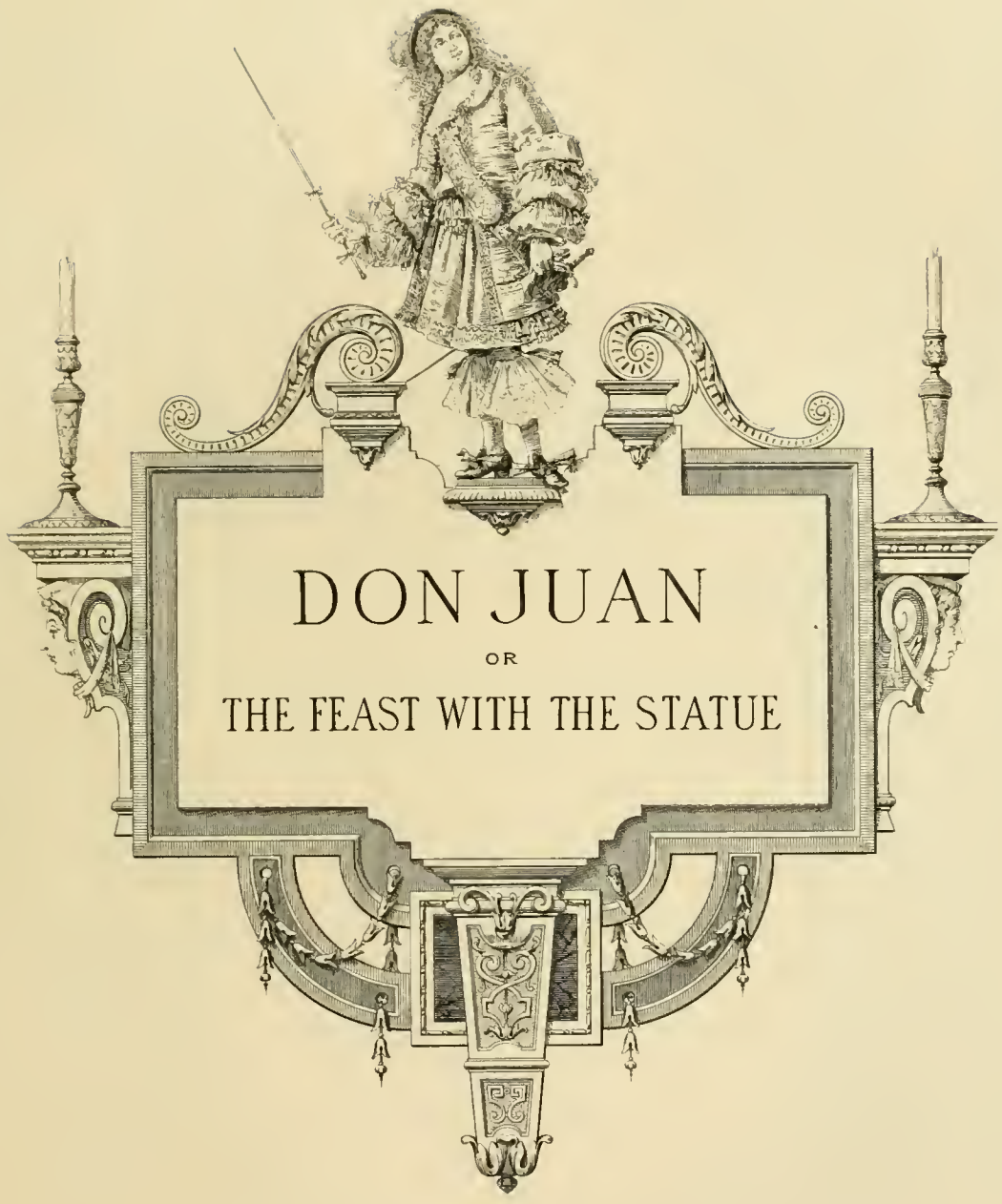

DON JUAN

OR

THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE

TITLE OF 1682

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

ARCHITECTURAL DECORATION. IN EACH OF THE LOWER CORNERS ARE LITTLE IMPS WITH SATYR'S FEET, BLACK WINGS, AND LITTLE BLACK HOODS; WHO BURN POOR HEARTS IN THE FLAMES WHICH ESCAPE FROM THE FISSURES OF THE ROCKS OF HELL. ABOVE, UNDER AN ARCHED PORTICO, IS THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDANT, IN ROMAN COSTUME, STANDING UPON A RICH SARCOPHAGUS DECORATED WITH THE ARMS OF MOLIERE. ON THE RIGHT, BETWEEN TWO COLUMNS, IS SGANARELLE, DRESSED AS A PHYSICIAN; HE POLITELY HOLDS HIS HAT IN HIS HAND AND SEEMS FOR THE MOMENT FRIGHTENED ENOUGH TO RUN AWAY. ON THE LEFT, BETWEEN TWO OTHER COLUMNS, DON JUAN PROUDLY GIVES HIS INVITATION TO THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDANT, WHO BOWS HIS HEAD IN ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

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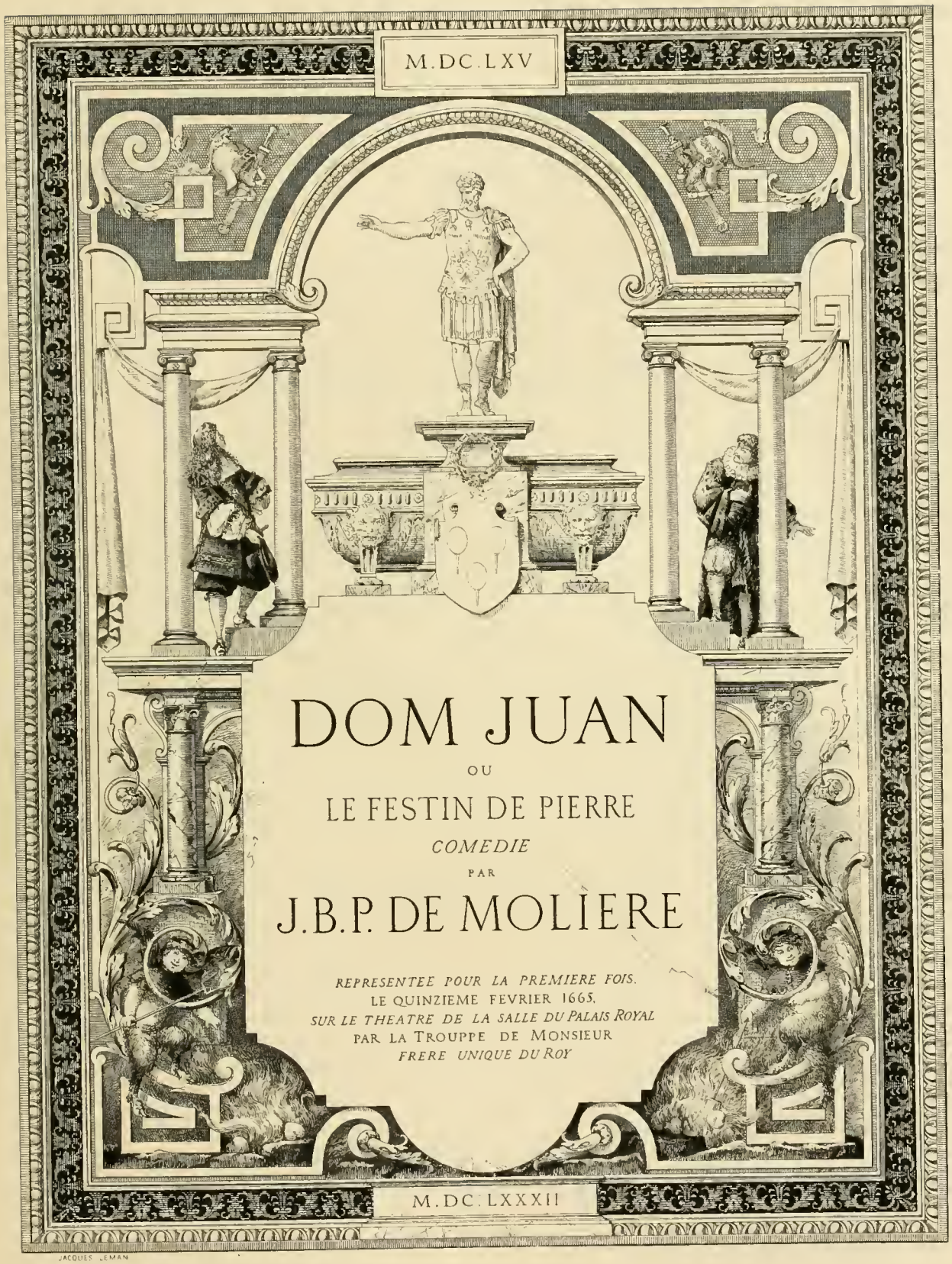

M.DC.LXV
DOM JUAN
OU
LE FESTIN DE PIERRE
COMEDIE
PAR
J.B.P. DE MOLIERE
REPRESENTEE POUR LA PREMIERE FOIS.
LE QUINZIEME FEVRIER 1665.
SUR LE THEATRE DE LA SALLE DU PALAIS ROYAL
PAR LA TROUPPE DE MONSIEUR
FRERE UNIQUE DU ROY
M.DC.LXXXII

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

After Molière had written *Tartuffe*, he found it impossible to get permission to play it; all his attempts were in vain; the clerical party was too strong for him; he therefore resolved to write a counterpart to it, in *Don Juan, or the Feast with the Statue*. This play was acted for the first time on the 15th of February, 1665. It contains, perhaps, more severe attacks upon hypocrisy than does even *Tartuffe*. It depicts the hero as a man who, rich, noble, powerful and bold, respects neither heaven nor earth, and knows no bounds to the gratification of his desires or his passions. He has excellent manners, but abominable principles; he is "a whited sepulchre," and abuses the privileges of nobility without acknowledging its obligations or its duties. Molière sketches no longer the nobleman as ridiculous, but makes him terrible, and shows that his exaggerated hatred of cant leads to the commission of the greatest immoralities, and to Atheism. After having seduced and abandoned many fair maids; after having insulted his father, and openly flaunted the most skeptical doctrines, Don Juan turns hypocrite; for hypocrisy is the climax of all vices. But although the hero of the play is young, elegant and profligate, Molière makes us feel all the while that, underneath that charming exterior lurks something venomous. No doubt he is witty, but too sarcastic to be pleasant. He is sensual, but less than is generally thought. He is not so much a libertine, as a man who loves to set all rules of decency, order and morality at defiance. What attracts him is something eccentric, violent and scandalous. He likes to seduce a nun, or an innocent country girl, who is already engaged; and this not through mere lust, but in order to prove that he can trample upon all human laws; just as he invites to supper the statue of a man whom he has killed, and plays the hypocrite in order to show his scorn for all divine laws. He is not a follower of the modern romantic school, always in pursuit of an eternal idea of beauty, and fluttering from flower to flower; he has arrived at that stage of satiety that only the pangs of his victims can produce any emotion in him. This is proved by the remark he makes to Sganarelle on beholding Donna Elvira (Act I., Scene 2, page 24). He has something of the cruelty of Lovelace in Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, and like him, is faithful

to his friends, generous to his enemies, but at the same time cowardly enough to sacrifice any woman to his caprices.

But Molière has not made the hero coarse or ribald; his language is always well chosen; and although his morality may be offensive, his manners are never so. The style of his speech is generally masterly, often eloquent, and not seldom characteristic of his sneering, insolent, cruel, hypocritical feelings. The author sometimes borders upon almost forbidden ground, as, for example, when Don Juan, after having witnessed the "surprising miracle of a moving and speaking statue," says—"There is really something in that which I do not understand; but, whatever it may be, it is not capable either of convincing my judgment, or of shaking my nerves."

And yet this play made far less sensation than *Tartuffe*, and its representations were never forbidden. The reason of this is simple; *Don Juan* attacked an abstract idea, but *Tartuffe* satirized a peculiar class, "the unco guid."

This drama came originally from Spain. A very old legend relates how one of the twenty-four governors of Sevilla, Don Juan de Tenorio, ran away with the daughter of the venerable Commander Gonzalo de Ulloa, whom he killed in a duel, and who was buried in the church of the Franciscans, where a splendid tomb and statue were erected to him. For some time, the murderer, thanks to the privileges of his rank and the influence of his family, set at naught human justice, when a rumor was circulated that, Don Juan having dared to insult the statue of his victim, the latter had come down from his marble tomb, had seized the impious wretch, and had precipitated him to the uttermost depths of the infernal regions. Those who said that he had been allured into the church, under some pretext or other, and slain there, were declared unbelievers and skeptics.

One of the Spanish dramatists, friar Gabriel Tellez, who lived at the beginning of the sixteenth century, wrote, under the name of Tirso de Molina, a comedy on this legend, which he divided into three *jornades* or days, and which he called *The Seducer of Sevilla and the Stone Guest.*

The action opens at Naples, where a certain Duchess Isabella, of whom Don Juan, under the feigned name of Duke Ottavio, has taken advantage, complains loudly to the king, who orders the guilty one to be seized. The seducer escapes, and is shipwrecked on the coast of Tarragona, in Spain, where he meets a young fisherman's daughter, Tisbea, whom he seduces under promise of marriage, and who, when undeceived, throws herself into the sea. We next meet him at Sevilla, where, under the name and disguise of his friend, the Marquis de la Mota, he treats Donna Anna, the daughter of the Commander de Ulloa, as he had treated Isabella. He then kills the Commander, and anew takes flight into the country, where he meets Aminta, who also falls a victim to his usual method of promising marriage. Don Juan secretly returns to Sevilla, and sees in the church the mausoleum of the Commander de Ulloa, bearing the inscription: "Here the most loyal of gentlemen awaits until God shall avenge him on a traitor." Don Juan and his servant, Catalinon, insult him and invite him to supper. The statue makes its appearance, and requests Don Juan to come to feast with him the next evening at ten o'clock in the chapel. He goes, and the seventeenth scene of the third

day shows us the funeral feast, in which Don Juan and the statue sup on scorpions and vipers, drink gall and vinegar; and in which, finally, the libertine repents, and asks for a priest to be confessed and to receive absolution. The last scene of the play represents the Alcazar at Sevilla, where the king repairs the crimes of Don Juan by giving all his victims away in marriage, and commands the tomb and statue of the Commander to be brought to Madrid, to remain there as a warning for all time. The Spanish Don Juan is not a heartless and deliberate seducer, a thorough unbeliever, but an easy-going fellow, swayed by his passion, who does not repent because he thinks he has sufficient time for it, and at the final catastrophe proves himself a good Roman Catholic. Moreover, he meets the statue, not because he disbelieves in miracles, but because he has given his word to come, and "the dead man might otherwise have the right to call (him) me infamous." The impression which the Spanish play leaves on the mind is eminently a religious one, and must have been strongly felt at the time it was written,—a feeling enhanced by the scene in the chapel, with the moonlight shining through the stained glass windows, and the chorus singing: "Let those who flee from the punishments of God, know that there is no term nor debt which must not be paid. No mortal living should say, 'I have time before me,' for the time of repentance is so short."

From Spain, this drama went to Italy, where Onifrio Giliberti wrote an imitation of the Spanish play, called *Il Convitato di pietra*, and which was performed in 1652, in which Don Juan appears as a high-born free-lover, making fun of everything, and even of the gods. In 1657, the Italian actors of Torelli, who played at the Théâtre du petit Bourbon, in Paris, gave a harlequinade, based on Giliberti's imitation. This piece was full of broad fun; and Arlequin, the servant, is the principal character, whose chief business seems to be to crack jokes and to indulge in practical horse-play.

The actor Dorimond, in 1658, translated the Italian play for the comedians of Mademoiselle (see Prefatory Memoir, Vol. I.), who were then at Lyons, and brought it to Paris in 1661. The translator made a blunder in the very title of the piece. *Il convitato* means "The guest;" but Dorimond thought it meant "feast," which was in old French *convive*, and in Italian *convito*, and thus gave to his piece the title, *Le Festin de Pierre*, the Stone Feast. This play was printed only in 1665, after the great success which Molière's comedy obtained. Villers also versified an imitation of Giliberti's comedy for the actors of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, with the same title as Dorimond's, and which was printed in 1660. It is probable that the Spanish actors, who appeared in France in 1659, on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XIV., with the Infanta Maria Theresa, had represented the original Spanish play.

Four years after Molière's *Don Juan, ou le Festin de Pierre*—for he kept the old title as well—had been performed, a certain actor, Rosimond, wrote for the Théâtre du Marais *Le Nouveau Festin de Pierre, ou l' Athée foudroyé*, in which he made of Don Juan a tiresome controversialist.

Don Juan was played from February 15, 1665, until the 20th of March of the same year; but produced so much irritation and remarks that several scenes—for example, that between the poor man and Don Juan, and the boldest remarks in the dialogue between Don

Juan and Sganarelle, had to be suppressed at once. It may even be supposed that Molière received a hint not to play the piece again; for after the 20th of March it disappeared for a long time from the scene.

In the month of April, 1665, a pamphlet appeared, called *Observations sur une Comédie de Molière intitulée Le Festin de Pierre*, and written by a clergyman called de Rochemont. It passed through three or four editions, which followed one another in quick succession, and is written in a good style, but full of the most bitter *animus* against our author. It faintly praises Molière, admits that he has some talent for farce, that he speaks passable French, translates Italian pretty well and does not copy badly other authors; but states that he is always the same, although the public should be indulgent to those who try to amuse them. If Molière had, in the *Précieuses*, only criticised the little doublets, and the prodigious quantity of ribands, nobody would have attacked him, or been indignant at him; but to make fun of religion, and openly to display skepticism, is too bad for a mere buffoon. *Don Juan* has caused a public scandal, which is the greater because it was performed in the house of a Christian prince, and in the presence of so many wise and pious magistrates. Whilst the greatest and most religious monarch in the world tries to destroy heresy, and to establish real devotion, Molière raises altars to impiety; his purpose is to ruin men whilst making them laugh; the malicious ingenuousness of his Agnes has corrupted more maidens than the most licentious writings; *Sganarelle* teaches how to make cuckolds, and *The School for Wives* how to debauch them. In fact, he first destroys the morals of men, and then their religion. To use his own words: "he does not mind if people criticise his pieces, so that they come to see them"[1] and pay for their places. Nothing more impious has ever appeared than *Tartuffe* and *Don Juan;* even Pagan emperors condemned to death those who ridiculed religion. It is to be hoped that our great Prince will put a stop to this: "Deluge, plague and famine are the consequences of Atheism; when Heaven resolves to punish it, it pours out upon us all the vials of its wrath to make the chastisement more impressive. The wisdom of the King will divert those misfortunes which impiety wishes to draw upon us; it would establish the altars which it endeavors to overturn; we shall see everywhere religion triumph over its enemies, under the sway of this pious and invincible monarch, the glory of his age, the ornament of his states, the beloved of his subjects, the terror of the unbelievers, the delight of the whole human race. *Vivat rex, vivat in æternum!* May the King live, but may he live eternally for the good of the Church, for the tranquillity of the State, and for the happiness of all nations!"

These observations were answered in a *Lettre sur les Observations d' une Comédie du Sieur Molière, intitulée Le Festin de Pierre*, published also in 1665, in which the author defends Molière; says that he is more than a mere buffoon; that the very fact that that most religious king, Louis XIV., allowed *Don Juan* to be acted before him, proves that there is no harm in the play; that people ought not to accuse Molière of infidelity without sufficient proof; that in this play virtue is rewarded and vice punished; that in *Don Juan*, as well as in *Tartuffe*, hypocrisy only is attacked, but not real religion; and that, finally, if we are to be visited by all those plagues prophesied by the *Observateur*, the hypocrites will be the first to feel the effects of them.

Another very badly written pamphlet was likewise published in the same year, in defense of Molière, having for its title *Réponse aux Observations touchant Le Festin de Pierre de Monsieur de Molière.*

In 1667, *Don Juan* reappeared on the French stage, but remodeled and put into verse by Thomas Corneille. This version, or rather perversion, of Molière's play was acted until the 15th of January, 1847, when the comedy, as originally written, was again performed, and continues to be so until the present day.

Sir Aston Cokain wrote *The Tragedy of Ovid*, which was printed in 1662, but which was never acted. In this, the passage of Captain Hannibal (Don Juan) inviting the dead body of Helvidius to supper, and the Spectre accepting it, and the latter afterwards inviting Hannibal to supper, as well as the final catastrophe, seem borrowed from the Italian play *Il Atheisto fulminato*, from which Molière appears also to have taken several scenes. In any case, Cokain cannot have borrowed from the French author, whose play was not brought out until February 15, 1665.

Thomas Shadwell (see Introductory Notice to *The Bores*, Vol. III.), has, in *The Libertine*, acted at Dorset Garden in 1676, partly imitated Molière. This play is dedicated to William, Duke of Newcastle; and in the preface it is admitted that "there are an Italian, a Spanish, and four French plays on the story of Don Juan, the character of the libertine, and consequently those of his friends are borrowed; but all the plot till the latter end of the fourth act is new." This seems not quite true; for in the second act of Shadwell's comedy there are evidently some scenes borrowed from Molière. In the English play, Don Juan loves wickedness, and philosophizes about it to his two friends, Don Lopez and Don Antonio; he causes his own father to be murdered, and, on the whole, behaves rather like a madman. The scenes between Don Juan, The Statue and Sganarelle—Jacomo in the English play—are pretty closely followed from Molière, but made more horrible. Shadwell's comedy met with great success, although our author states: "there being no act in it which cost me above five days' writing, and the last two (the playhouse having great occasion for a play) were both written in four days." The Prologue opens thus:

"Our Author sent me hither for a Scout,
To spy what bloody Criticks were come out.
Those Piccaroons in Wit, wh' infest this Road,
And snap both Friend and Foe that come abroad.
This savage Party crueller appears
Than in the Channel Ostend Privateers.
You in this Road, or sink or plunder all;
Remorseless as a Storm on us you fall.
But as a Merchant, when by Storm distres'd,
Flings out his bulky goods to save the rest,
Hoping a Calm may come, he keeps the best.
In this black Tempest which o'er us impends,
Near Rocks and Quicksands, and no Port of Friends,
Our Poet gives this over to your Rage,
The most irregular Play upon the Stage."

Congreve has imitated, in *Love for Love* (Act I., Scene 1), acted for the first time in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1695, the scene from Molière's *Don Juan* between M. Dimanche and the hero of the play. *Love for Love* appears to me to be a free imitation of three of Molière's plays; the scenes between Valentine and Jeremy are something like those between Don Juan and Sganarelle, from *Don Juan;* Scandal, Tattle, Mrs. Foresight and Mrs. Frail, are followed from similar characters in *The Misanthrope;* whilst Foresight seems Harpagon from *The Miser*. *Love for Love* was, curiously enough, acted entirely by women June 25th, 27th and 29th, 1705; the first two times most likely at Lincoln's Inn Fields, the last, at the Haymarket.

At the Royalty Theatre was acted, in 1787, a tragic pantomimical entertainment, called *Don Juan, or the Libertine Destroyed*, composed by M. Delpini; the songs, duets, and choruses by Mr. Reeve. At Drury Lane, in 1790, was played a pantomime-ballet of the same name.

Moncrieff wrote an operatic extravaganza, in two acts, called *Giovanni in London, or the Libertine Reclaimed*. "Don Giovanni having, like his noble compeers, made the *grand tour*, and also acquired additional notoriety, by being forcibly ejected from that place where Telemachus went to look for his father, jumps into Charon's boat, re-passes the river Styx, and pays a visit to London, for the purpose, like the man when he opened the oysters, of astonishing the *natives*. In this expedition he is accompanied by his valet, pimp, and bottle-holder, Leporello; and whether at the Magpie and Punch-Bowl, in the Borough—in St. Giles' with Mesdames Drainemdry, Porous and Simpkins—at Chalk Farm, with Finikin and Popinjay—in the King's Bench, with Shirk, Sponge and other gentlemen who pay their creditors by a bill at three months—or at Charing Cross, in company with King Charles on horseback—their adventures are equally wonderful and entertaining." This piece was originally written for the Olympic Theatre, but was played in 1827 both at Drury Lane and at Covent Garden. In the last mentioned theatre the late Madame Vestris created a certain furore, in acting the hero of the piece.

Thomas Dibdin wrote a similar piece, called *Don Giovanni, or the Spectre on Horse-back*, a burlesque on Mozart's celebrated opera, which was acted at Bath, on the 19th of May, 1819.

On the 22d of December, 1821, there was performed at Drury Lane, an opera called *Giovanni in Ireland*, in which Madame Vestris again played the hero; but it met with little success.

Goldine, the Italian dramatist, also wrote a *Don Juan, or the Libertine*, a comedy in five acts, and in blank verse, of which he says in his Autobiography: "Having learned enough of French to be able to read it, I found that Molière and Thomas Corneille had employed their talents on the same subject; I undertook also to give a similar treat to my countrymen, that I might be on somewhat decent terms with the devil. I could not, it is true, give the same title to it; for in my piece, the statue of the Commander neither speaks, moves, nor goes to sup in town . . . I could not dispense with the thunder which strikes Don Juan, because the wicked deserve to be punished; but I brought about the event in such a way that it might

either be an immediate effect of the wrath of God, or might proceed from a combination of secondary causes under the direction of the laws of providence."

Mozart also composed the music to an opera called *Don Giovanni*,—in which the Italian librettist, Delponte, has followed rather the old Spanish play than Molière,—and which is known and admired wherever music is cultivated.

NOTE

[1] See *The School for Wives Criticised*, Vol. IV., Scene 7.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DON JUAN, Son to Don Louis.

DON CARLOS, } Brothers to Donna Elvira.
DON ALONZO, }

DON LOUIS, Father to Don Juan.

THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDER.[1]

GUZMAN, Gentleman-usher to Donna Elvira.

M. DIMANCHE, A tradesman.

SGANARELLE,[2] }
VIOLETTE, } Servants to Don Juan.
RAGOTIN, }

PIERROT, A countryman.

LA RAMEE, A swashbuckler.

A POOR MAN.

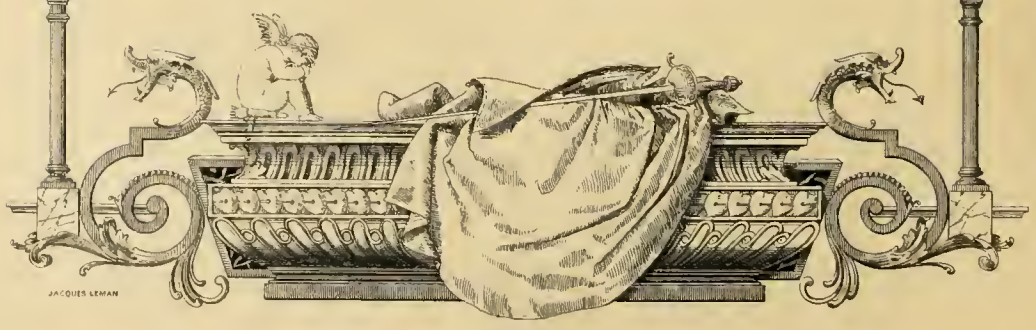
DON JUAN'S FOLLOWERS.

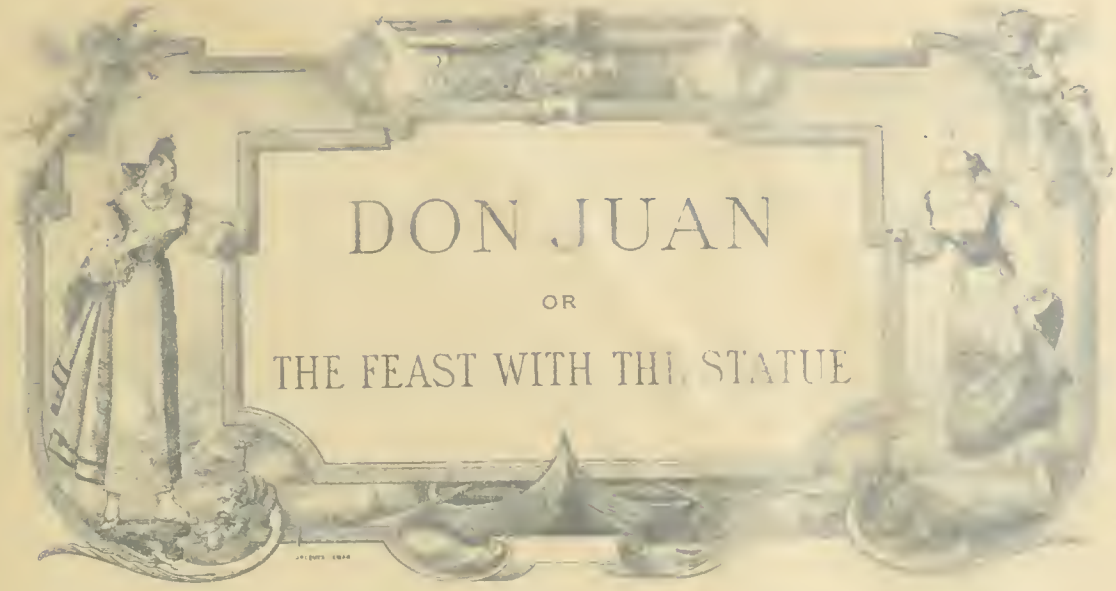
DON CARLOS' AND DON ALONZO'S FOLLOWERS.

A GHOST.

DONNA ELVIRA, Wife to Don Juan.

CHARLOTTE, } Country-women.
MATHURINE, }





DON JUAN

OR

THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

BELOW IS THE TOMB OF DON JUAN, ORNAMENTED WITH A FRIEZE OF HEARTS. ON THE SARCOPHAGUS IS HIS MANTLE AND HIS SWORD: AT ONE END SITS A LITTLE CUPID, HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, MOURNING HE WHO HAS BEEN HIS MOST VALIANT SERVANT. ON THE RIGHT AND ON THE LEFT ARE SLENDER COLUMNS, ENTWINED BY IVY, ON WHICH ARE SHIELDS WITH CUPIDS CARRYING ON THEIR SHOULDERS HEARTS PIERCED BY ARROWS. THE COLUMN ON THE RIGHT SUPPORTS THE HEAD OF DON JUAN, AND THAT ON THE LEFT THAT OF DONNA ELVIRA.

SCENE I.—*A Palace.* SGANARELLE, GUZMAN.

SGAN. (*With a snuff-box in his hand.*) Whatever Aristotle and all the philosophers may say, nothing can be compared to tobacco: all respectable men are very fond of it, and he who lives without it deserves not to live. It not only enlivens, it clears a man's brains, but it also teaches one to be virtuous; through it one learns to be a respectable man. Do you see my point? as soon as we take it, how quickly we become

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DON JUAN, Son to Don Louis

DON CARLOS, } Brothers to Donna Elvira.
DON ALONZO, }

DON LOUIS, Father to Don Juan.

THE STATUE OF THE COMMANDER.

GUZMAN, Gentleman-usher to Donna Elvira.

M. DIMANCHE, A [illegible]

SGANARELLE, }
VIOLETTE, } Servants to Don Juan.
RAGOTIN, }

PIERROT, A [illegible]

LA RAMEE, A [illegible]

A [illegible]

DON [illegible]

[illegible]

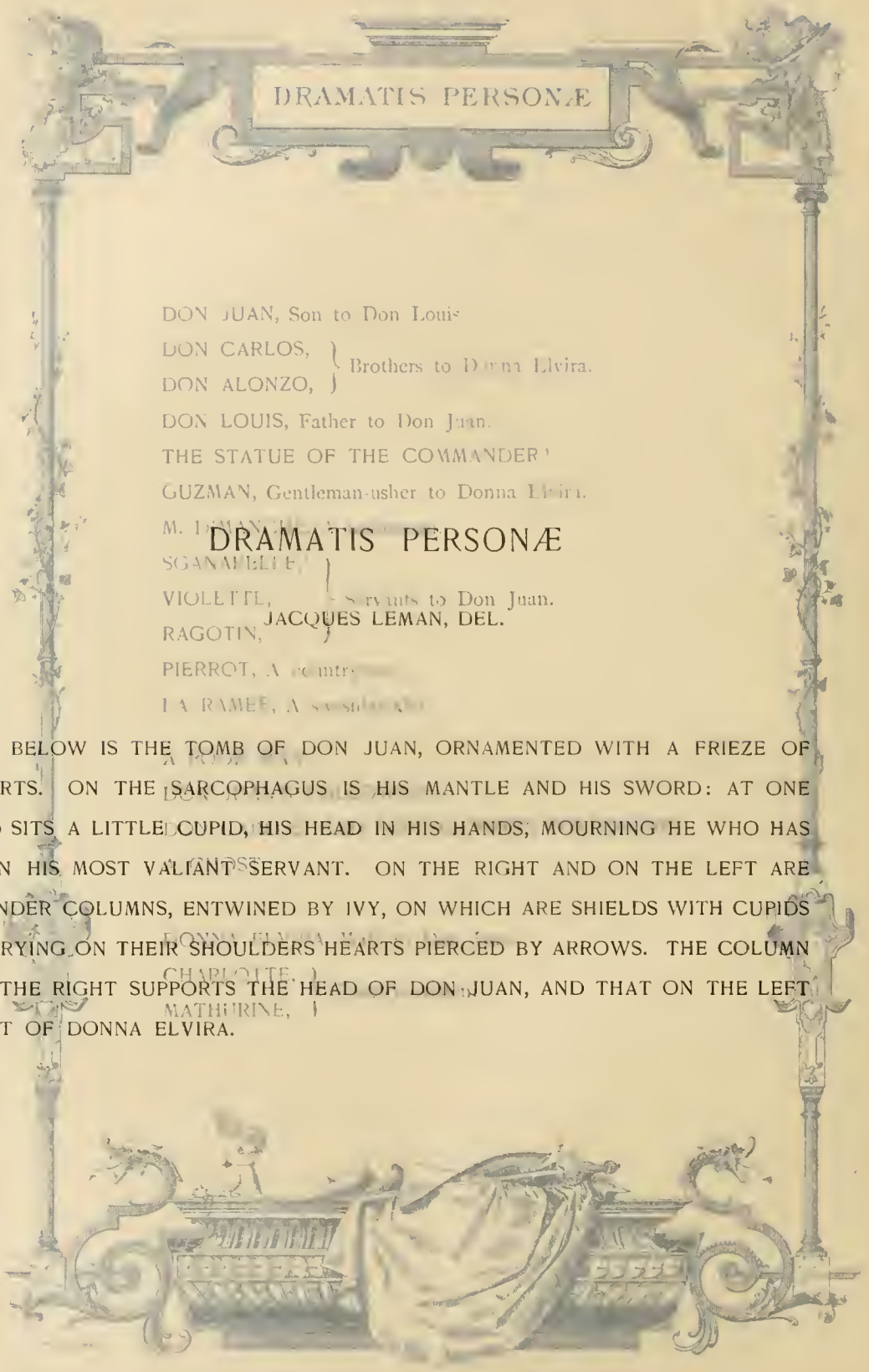
A GHOST

DONNA ELVIRA, [illegible]

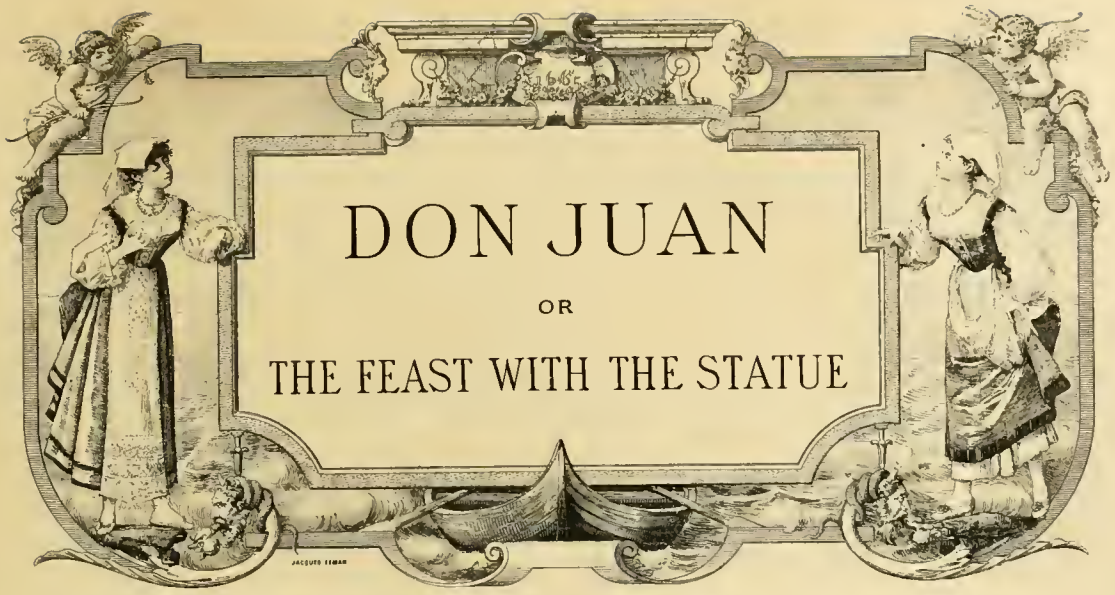
CHARLOTTE, }
MATHURINE, }

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.



BELOW IS THE TOMB OF DON JUAN, ORNAMENTED WITH A FRIEZE OF HEARTS. ON THE SARCOPHAGUS IS HIS MANTLE AND HIS SWORD: AT ONE END SITS A LITTLE CUPID, HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, MOURNING HE WHO HAS BEEN HIS MOST VALIANT SERVANT. ON THE RIGHT AND ON THE LEFT ARE SLENDER COLUMNS, ENTWINED BY IVY, ON WHICH ARE SHIELDS WITH CUPIDS CARRYING ON THEIR SHOULDERS HEARTS PIERCED BY ARROWS. THE COLUMN ON THE RIGHT SUPPORTS THE HEAD OF DON JUAN, AND THAT ON THE LEFT THAT OF DONNA ELVIRA.



DON JUAN

OR

THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE

ACT I.

SCENE I.—(*A Palace.*)—SGANARELLE, GUZMAN.

SGAN. (*With a snuff-box in his hand.*) Whatever Aristotle and all the philosophers may say, nothing can be compared to tobacco: all respectable men are very fond of it, and he who lives without tobacco deserves not to live. It not only enlivens and clears a man's brains, but it also teaches men to be virtuous; through it one learns to become a respectable man. Do you not see plainly, as soon as we take it, how affable we become with every one, and how delighted we are to give right and left, wherever we are? We do not even wait till it is asked for, but we forestall people's wishes; so true it is that tobacco inspires all those who take it with sentiments of honor and virtue.[3] But enough of this: let us rather resume our discourse. So, then, dear Guzman, Donna Elvira, your mistress, being surprised at our departure, is come after us; and my master has touched her heart so intensely, that you say she cannot exist without coming here in search of him. Between

ourselves, do you wish me to tell you my thoughts? I am afraid her love will be ill repaid, that her journey to this city will produce little fruit, and that you would have gained just as much had you never stirred from the spot.

GUZ. And pray, Sganarelle, what can inspire you with a terror which so augurs ill? Has your master opened his heart to you on that subject, and did he tell you that his coldness for us obliged him to leave?

SGAN. Not at all; but, by what I see, I know pretty well how things are; and, although he has not yet said anything to me, I could almost lay a wager that the business is tending that way. I may, perhaps, be mistaken; but yet, in such cases, experience has given me some insight.

GUZ. What! Can this sudden departure be caused by the faithlessness of Don Juan. Could he insult so greatly the chaste love of Donna Elvira?

SGAN. No, no, he is young yet, and has not the courage to . . .

GUZ. Can a man of his rank commit so base an action!

SGAN. Oh yes, his rank! The idea is really admirable; he would forbear on that account!

GUZ. But he is restrained by the holy bonds of matrimony.

SGAN. Ah! poor Guzman, my good friend, believe me, you do not know yet what sort of man Don Juan is.

GUZ. Truly, I do not know what sort of a man he may be, if he has acted so treacherously towards us. I do not understand how, after so much love and impatience shown, such homage urged upon us, such vows, sighs, and tears, so many passionate letters, such ardent protestations and repeated oaths, such transports in short, and such outbursts, forcing even, in his passion, the sacred obstacle of a nunnery, in order to get Donna Elvira in his power; I do not understand, I say, how after all this, he should have the heart to break his word.

SGAN. I have no great difficulty in understanding this; and, if you knew the fellow, you would think the thing easy enough for him. I do not say that he has changed his sentiments for Donna Elvira; I am not yet quite sure of it. You know that he ordered me to set out before him; and since his arrival, he has not spoken to me; but, by way of precaution, I tell you, between ourselves, that Don Juan, my master, is one of the greatest scoundrels upon earth, a madman, a dog, a demon, a Turk, a heretic, who believes neither in heaven, hell, nor devil, who passes his life like a regular brute beast, one of Epicurus' swine, a true Sardanapalus, who shuts his ears against all Christian remonstrances that can be made to him, and considers all that we believe as so much nonsense. You tell me that he has married your mistress; believe me, he would have done more to satisfy his passion, and would, besides herself, have married you, her dog and her cat into the bargain. It costs him nothing to contract a marriage; he uses no other snares to entrap the fair sex; and he marries whomsoever he can get hold of. A lady, gentlewoman, citizen's daughter, countrywoman; he thinks nothing too hot or too cold for him; and if I were to tell you the names of all those whom he has married in different places, I would not have finished until night.[4] You seem surprised and change color at what you hear; this is a mere outline of the man; and many other touches would be required to finish the picture. Let it be sufficient that

some day or other Heaven must needs overwhelm him with its wrath; that I had much better be with the devil than with him, and that he makes me witness so many horrors, that I could wish him already I do not know where! If a great lord is a wicked man, it is a terrible thing. I must be faithful to him in spite of myself; fear moves me instead of zeal, curbs my sentiments, and often compels me to applaud what I detest from my very soul. See, there he comes to take a walk in this palace; let us separate. One word more; I have trusted you, and not concealed anything from you; it came a little too quickly out of my mouth; but, if ever anything should reach his ears, I shall declare flatly that you have told a lie.

SCENE II.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Ju. What man was just now talking to you? He has very much the air, it seems to me, of honest Guzman, a servant of Donna Elvira.

Sgan. It is something very like it.

D. Ju. What! it is he?

Sgan. The very man.

D. Ju. And how long has he been in town?

Sgan. Since last night.

D. Ju. And why has he come?

Sgan. I believe you may imagine well enough what disturbs him.

D. Ju. Our departure, no doubt?

Sgan. The good man is quite offended, and asked me the cause of it.

D. Ju. And what answer did you give him?

Sgan. That you had not told me anything about it.

D. Ju. But, prithee, what do you think of it? What do you imagine about this affair?

Sgan. I? I believe, without wronging you, that you have some new love affair in your head.

D. Ju. Do you think so?

Sgan. Yes.

D. Ju. Upon my word, you are not mistaken; and I must confess another object has driven Elvira from my thoughts.

Sgan. Oh! good heavens! I know my Don Juan at my fingers' ends, and that your heart is the most restless in the world; it delights to rove from one set of chains to another and never likes to stay in one spot.

D. Ju. And tell me, do you not think I am right in acting in such a manner?

Sgan. Oh! sir . . .

D. Ju. What! Speak.

Sgan. Certainly, you are right, if you have a mind to it; no one can say anything against it. But, if you had not a mind to it, it might perhaps be another affair.

D. Ju. Well, then, I give you leave to speak, and to tell me your sentiments.

Sgan. In that case, sir, I must frankly tell you that I do not approve of your goings on, and that I think it very wicked to make love to every one, as you do.

D. Ju. What! Would you have a man bind himself to remain with the first object which has caught him, renounce the world for her

sake, and have no more eyes for anybody? A nice thing to pique one's self upon the false honor of being faithful, to bury one's self forever in one passion, and to be dead from our very youth to all other beauties that may strike us! No, no, constancy is fit only for fools; every handsome woman has a right to charm us, and the advantage of being first met with ought not to rob others of the just pretensions which they all have upon our hearts. As for me beauty delights me wherever I meet with it, and I easily give myself up to that sweet violence with which it hurries us along. It does not matter if I am engaged; the love I feel for one fair does not induce me to do injustice to others; I have eyes to see the merit of all, and pay to every one the homage and tribute which nature demands from us. However it be, I cannot refuse my heart to any lovely creature I behold; and as soon as a handsome face asks it of me, if I had ten thousand hearts, I would give them all. Budding inclinations, after all have a charm which is indescribable, and all the pleasure of love is in variety. One takes great delight in reducing, by a hundred contrivances, the heart of a young beauty; in seeing every day the gradual progress one has made; in combating with transports, tears, and sighs, the innocent bashfulness of a mind which can hardly prevail upon itself to surrender; in demolishing, inch by inch, all the little resistance she can oppose to us; in conquering the scruples upon which she prides herself, and in leading her gently whither we have a mind to bring her. But when we are once her master, there is nothing more to say, nothing more to wish for; all the charms of the passion are over, and we are lulled asleep in the tranquillity of such a love, if some new object does not awaken our desires and present to our heart the attractive charms of a conquest still to make. In short, there is nothing so pleasant as to triumph over the resistance of a fair maiden; I possess, in such a case, the ambition of a conqueror, who flies perpetually from one victory to another, and can never resolve to set bounds to his wishes. Nothing can restrain the impetuosity of my desires; I feel I have a heart that could love all the world, and like Alexander, I could wish for other worlds, wherein to extend my amorous conquests.[5]

SGAN. Ods' boddikins, how you talk! It seems that you have learned this by heart; you speak like a book.

D. JU. What have you to say to this?

SGAN. Upon my word, I have to say . . . I do not know what to say; for you turn things in such a manner that it seems you are right, and yet it is certain you are not. I had the finest thoughts in the world, but your speech has put them all out of my head. Let me alone; another time I shall write down all my arguments, to dispute with you.

D. JU. Do so.

SGAN. But, sir, would it be included in the permission you have given me, if I were to tell you that I am somewhat scandalized at the life which you lead?

D. JU. How? What life do I lead?

SGAN. A very good one. But, for example, to see you marry every month, as you do!

D. JU. Can there be anything more agreeable?

SGAN. True, I should think it very agreeable and very amusing, and I should myself like it well enough if there were no harm in it; but, sir, to make thus a jest of a sacred mystery, and . . .

D. JU. Well, be it so, it is an affair between Heaven and me, and I can very well settle it without your troubling yourself about it.

SGAN. Upon my word, sir, I have always heard it said that to jest about Heaven is wicked jesting, and that libertines always come to a bad end.

D. JU. Hullo, Master Fool! You know I told you that I do not like persons who remonstrate.

SGAN. Therefore I do not speak to you! Heaven forbid! You know what you do; and, if you are a libertine[6] you have your reasons: but there are certain puny coxcombs in this world who are so without knowing why or wherefore, who pretend to be free-thinkers, because they think it becomes them. Had I a master of that kind, I would tell him plainly to his face: "Dare you thus jest with Heaven, and do you not tremble to laugh, as you do, at things the most sacred? Does it become you, you little earthworm, you mannikin that you are (I speak to the master I mentioned), does it become you to wish to turn into ridicule what all men revere? Do you think that because you are a man of rank, because you wear a fair and well-curled wig, have some feathers in your hat, a gold-laced coat, and flame-colored ribbons[7] (I do not speak to you but to the other)—do you think, I say, that you are a cleverer man for all this, that you may be allowed to do everything, and that no one should dare to tell you the truth? Learn from me, who am your servant, that Heaven, sooner or later, punishes the impious; that a wicked life leads to a wicked death; that libertines never come to a good end, and that . . ."

D. JU. Silence!

SGAN. Why, what is the matter?

D. JU. The matter is, that I inform you that a certain beauty has got possession of my heart, and that, captivated by her charms, I followed her to this city.

SGAN. And you have no fear, sir, of the consequences of the death of that Commander whom you killed six months ago?

D. JU. Why should I be afraid? Did I not kill him honorably?

SGAN. Very honorably; it could not have been done more so, and he would be wrong to complain.

D. JU. I had my pardon for this affair.

SGAN. Yes; but this pardon does not perhaps stifle the resentment of relatives and friends, and . . .

D. JU. Pooh! Let us not think of any harm that may happen to us, but only of what can give us pleasure. The person of whom I speak to you is a young bride, one of the prettiest in the world, who was brought hither by the very man she is to marry. Chance threw this pair of lovers in my way, three or four days before they set out on their journey. Never did I see two people so satisfied with each other; and displaying so much love. The visible tenderness of their mutual flame moved me; I felt it deeply, and my love began by jealousy. Yes, I could not at first sight endure to see them so happy together. Resentment kindled my desire, and I thought it would cause me very great pleasure to disturb their intimacy, and to sever that union by which the delicate feelings of my heart were offended; but hitherto all my efforts have been in vain, and I have recourse to the final stratagem. This intended spouse is to-day to treat the object of his love with a sail. Without having said anything to you, all things are prepared for gratifying my passion. I have freighted a little vessel, and engaged men with whose assistance I can easily carry off the fair.

SGAN. Ah! sir . . .

D. JU. What?

SGAN. You have done quite right, and you take things in the proper way. There is nothing in the world like satisfying all one's desires.

D. JU. Get ready to come along with me, and take care, for yourself, to bring all my arms, so that . . . (*He sees Donna Elvira.*) Oh! most unlucky meeting. Traitor, you did not tell me she was here herself.

SGAN. Sir, you did not so much as ask me.

D. JU. Is she mad not to have changed her dress, and to come here in her riding-habit?[8]

SCENE III.—DONNA ELVIRA, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. EL. Will you do me the favor, Don Juan, to notice me? And may I at least hope that you will deign to turn your eyes this way?

D. JU. I confess to you, madam, that I am surprised, and that I did not expect you here.

D. EL. Yes, I see plainly that you did not expect me here; and you are indeed surprised, but quite otherwise than I hoped for; the manner in which you appear convinces me fully of what I refused to believe. I am astonished at my simplicity, and at the weakness of my heart in doubting a treachery so strongly confirmed by appearances. I was simple-minded enough, I confess it, or rather foolish enough, to be willing to deceive myself, and to take pains to contradict my eyes and my judgment. I sought for reasons to excuse to my affection that diminution of friendship which it discovered in you; and I purposely invented a hundred legitimate excuses for so hurried a departure, to clear you from the crime of which my reason accused you. All that my just suspicions could daily say to me was vain; I would not listen to their voice, which represented you to me as a criminal; I took a pleasure in giving ear to a thousand ridiculous fancies, which depicted you to my heart as innocent; but, at last, your reception permits me no longer to doubt, and the glance with which you received me informs me of many more things than I would wish to know. I shall be glad, nevertheless, to hear from your own mouth the reasons for your departure. Pray, speak, Don Juan, let us hear in what way you can justify yourself.

D. JU. Madam, there is Sganarelle, who knows why I went away.

SGAN. (*Whispering to Don Juan.*) I, sir! By your leave, I know nothing of the matter.

D. EL. Well, Sganarelle, speak. It does not matter from whose mouth I hear his reasons.

D. JU. (*Making signs to Sganarelle to draw near him.*) Come, speak then to the lady.

SGAN. (*Whispering to Don Juan.*) What would you have me say?

D. El. Come hither, since he will have it so, and tell me the causes of so sudden a departure.

D. Ju. Why do you not answer?

Sgan. (*Whispering to Don Juan.*) I have nothing to answer. You make fun of your very humble servant.

D. Ju. Will you answer, I say?

Sgan. Madam . . .

D. El. What?

Sgan. (*Turning towards his master.*) Sir . . .

D. Ju. (*Threatening him.*) If . . .

Sgan. Madam, the conqueror, Alexander, and the other worlds, are the cause of our departure. That, sir, is all I can say.

D. El. Will you be pleased, Don Juan, to explain to me these beautiful mysteries?

D. Ju. Madam, to say the truth . . .

D. El. Fie! how badly you defend yourself for a courtier, who should be accustomed to these sorts of things! I pity you to see you so confused. Why do you not arm your brow with a noble impudence? Why do you not swear that you entertain still the same feelings for me; that you always love me with an unparalleled affection, and that nothing but death can sever you from me? Why do you not tell me that affairs of the greatest consequence compelled you to set out without informing me of it; that, much against your will, you must stay here for some time; and that I need only return whence I came, with the assurance that you will follow me as soon as possible; that it is certain you are very anxious to rejoin me, and that, whilst you are absent from me, you endure the pangs of a body separated from the soul? That is the way to defend yourself; but not to stand thunderstruck as you do.

D. Ju. I must confess, madam, that I possess not a talent for dissimulation, but am sincere at heart. I will not tell you that I entertain still the same feelings for you, and that I am very anxious to rejoin you, since it is certain that I came away only to avoid you; not for the reasons you imagine, but from a pure motive of conscience, and because I thought I could not live with you any longer without sin. I felt some scruples, madam; and the eyes of my mind were opened to what I was doing. I reflected that, in order to marry you, I took you from the precincts of a convent, that you broke vows which engaged you elsewhere, and that Heaven is very jealous of such things. I was seized with repentance, and dreaded the wrath of Heaven. I thought our marriage was only adultery in disguise; that it would bring down upon us some calamity, and that, in short, I ought to endeavor to forget you, and to give you an opportunity of returning to your former obligations. Would you oppose so holy a design, madam, and would you have me expose myself to the vengeance of Heaven by retaining you; that by . . .

D. El. Ah! wicked wretch! now I know you thoroughly; and to my misfortune I know you when it is too late, and when such a knowledge can only serve to make me despair. But be assured that your crime will not remain unpunished, and that the same Heaven which you mock will revenge your perfidy.

D. Ju. Sganarelle, Heaven!

Sgan. Oh, yes, we care much for that.

D. Ju. Madam . . .

D. El. It is enough. I do not wish to hear anything more. I even blame myself for having already heard too much. It is meanness to have our shame explained too clearly, and in such cases, a noble heart should, at the very first word, resolve what to do. Do not

expect me to break out into reproaches and opprobrious language ; no, no, my wrath does not spend itself in vain words ; it reserves all its ardor for vengeance. I tell you once more, Heaven will punish you, wretch, for the wrong you have done me ; and if you have nothing to fear from Heaven, fear at least the anger of an injured woman.

SCENE IV.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

Sgan. (*Aside.*) If he should ever feel some remorse.

D. Ju. (*After some pause.*) Let us go and think of the execution of our amorous enterprise.

Sgan. (*Alone.*) Oh ! what an abominable master I am forced to serve !

ACT II.

SCENE I.—(*A Landscape near the sea-shore.*)—CHARLOTTE, PIERROT.[9]

CHAR. By Jingo, Pierrot, you were there just in the nick of time.

PIER. 'Sbobs, they were within an ace of being drowned, both of them.

CHAR. Was it the great storm this morning that upset them in the sea?

PIER. Look you, Charlotte, I shall tell you outright how it happened; for, as the saying is, I saw them first, first I saw them. I was on the sea-shore, I and fat Lucas, and we were a-larking together with clods of earth, that we threw at one another's heads, for you very well know that fat Lucas likes to be a-larking, and so do I sometimes too. So as we were a-larking, for we were a-larking, I perceived a distance off something that stirred in the water, and that came bobbing towards us. I looked fixedly at it, but all of a sudden I saw that I saw nothing more. Ay, Lucas, says I, I think that there are men a-swimming down there. Oh, says he, you have been at the burial of a cat, your eyes are dazed.

'Sdeath, says I, my eyes are not dazed; they are men. No, no, says he to me, you are purblind. Would you wager, says I, that I am not purblind, says I, and that they are two men, says I, who are swimming straight this way, says I. Znigs, says he, I lay a wager they are not. Well, come on, says I, I will lay you tenpence on it. Marry will I, says he, and to show thee, there is the money down on the nail, says he. I was neither a fool nor a gaby; I boldly threw down upon the ground four silver pennies and sixpenny worth of ha'pence, as freely, i' faith, as if I had drank off a glass of wine; for I am very venturesome, and go on any way. Yet I knew what I did howsomdever. I am not such a fool as I look. We had but just laid the wager when I saw the two men very plainly, who made signs to us to come and fetch them, and I take up the stakes. Come, Lucas, says I, you see that they call us; let us go at once and help them. No, says he, they have made me lose. Then, to cut short my story, I went on so, and at last preached so much to him, that we got into a boat, and then I made so much ado that I got them out of the water, and then I carried them home to the fire, and then they pulled off all their clothes and stripped to dry themselves, and then two more of the same gang came, who had saved themselves quite alone, and then comes Mathurine, and one of them cast sheep's eyes at her. And that is precisely, Charlotte, how all this has happened.

CHAR. Did you not say, Pierrot, that one of them is a great deal handsomer than the rest?

PIER. Ay, he is the master; he must be some great, great man to be sure, for he has gold upon his clothes from top to bottom, and his servants are gentlefolks themselves; but for all his being a great man, he would have been drowned if I had not been there.

CHAR. Lackaday!

PIER. Ay, indeed, if it had not been for us he would have had his fill of water.

CHAR. Is he still at your house without his clothes on, Pierrot?

PIER. No, no, they all put on their clothes again before us. Mercy on me, I never saw any of these folks dress themselves before; what a parcel of gimcracks these courtiers wear! I should lose myself in them, and I was quite flabbergasted to see them. Why, Charlotte, they have hair which does not stick to their heads, and, after all, they put it on like a big cap of unspun flax. They have smocks with sleeves that you and I might get into; instead of breeches they have an apron as large as from this to Easter, instead of doublets they have little tiny waistcoats that do not reach to their middle, and instead of bands a great neck-handkerchief all open-worked with four large tufts of linen hanging down over their stomach. They have bands about their wrists too, and great funnels of lace about their legs, and amongst all this so many ribands, that it is a downright shame. Their very shoes are stuffed with them from one end to the other, and they are made in such a fashion that I should break my neck in them.

CHAR. I' fakins, Pierrot, I must go and see them.

PIER. Oh! Hark you, Charlotte, stay a little first, I have something else to say to you.

CHAR. Well, tell me, what is it?

PIER. Do you not see, Charlotte, that, as the saying is, I must unbosom myself to you? I am in love with you, you know it very well, I am for us being married together; but 's boddikins, I am not pleased with you.

CHAR. How? what's the matter?

PIER. The matter is, to tell the truth, that you vex my very heart.

CHAR. How so?

PIER. Because, by the powers, you do not love me.

CHAR. Ho! ho! Is that all?

PIER. Ay, that is all, and enough too.

CHAR. Law, Pierrot, you always say the same thing to me.

PIER. I always say the same thing to you because it is always the same thing; and if it was not always the same thing I would not always say the same thing.

CHAR. But what do you want? What do you wish?

PIER. Drat it, I would wish you to love me.

CHAR. Why, do I not love you?

PIER. No, you do not love me, and yet I do all I can do to make you. I do not mean to reproach you, but I buy ribbons for you of all the pedlars that come about, I risk my neck to go and fetch jackdaws out of their nests for you, I make the piper play for you when your birthday comes; and all this is no more than if I ran my head against the wall. Do ye hear! it is neither fair nor honest not to love folk that love us.

CHAR. But, lackaday, I love you too.

PIER. Ay, very much indeed!

CHAR. What would you have me do then?

PIER. I would have you do as folk do when they love as they ought.

CHAR. Why, do I not love you as I ought?

PIER. No, when that is the case, anyone can see it; people play a thousand little tricks to folk when they love them with all their heart. Look at stout Thomasse, how smitten she is with young Robin; she is always about him to tease him, and never lets him alone. She is always playing him some trick or other, or hits him a rap when she passes by him. The other day, as he was sitting upon a small stool, she comes and pulls it from under him, and down falls he at full length upon the ground. Zounds, that is the way folk do when they are in love; but you never say a word to me, you always stand like a log of wood; I may go by ye twenty times and you never stir to give me the smallest thump, or to say the least thing to me. Upon my word, it is not fair, after all, and you are too cold for folk.

CHAR. What would you have me do? My temper is such, and I cannot alter myself.

PIER. Temper or no temper, when a body loves a body one always gives some small inkling of it.

CHAR. I love you as well as I can, and if you are not satisfied with that, you must go and love somebody else.

PIER. Why there now! I have got what I bargained for. Zooks, if you loved me you would not say that.

CHAR. Why do you come and worrit me so?

PIER. And what harm do I do you? I only ask a little friendship from ye.

CHAR. Well, let me alone then and do not press me so, maybe it will come all of a sudden, without thinking of it.

PIER. Shake hands, then, Charlotte.

CHAR. (*Gives him her hand.*) Well, there.

PIER. Promise me that you will do your best to love me more.

CHAR. I will do all that I can, but it must come of itself. Pierrot, is that the gentleman?

PIER. Yes, that is he.

CHAR. Oh! lackaday, how nice he is! what a pity it would have been if he had been drowned.

PIER. I shall come again presently; I shall go to take a pint to refresh myself a little after fatigue.

SCENE II.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, CHARLOTTE (*in the background*).

D. JU. We have failed in our plot, Sganarelle, and this sudden squall has overturned our sloop, as well as the plan we had formed; but, to tell you the truth, the country-wench I have just parted with, makes amends for this misfortune. I have found such charms in her that they have effaced from my mind all the vexation caused by the ill success of our enterprise. This heart must not escape me: I have already disposed it in such a manner that I shall have no need to sigh long in vain.

SGAN. I confess, sir, you astonish me. We have hardly escaped from the jaws of death, and instead of thanking Heaven for the mercy it has granted us, you labor anew to draw down its wrath by your usual whims and your amours . . . (*Seeing Don Juan look angry.*) Peace, rascal that you are; you do not know what you are talking of, and my master knows what he does. Come.

D. JU. (*Perceiving Charlotte.*) Ha! whence comes this other country-girl? Did you ever see anything prettier? Tell me, do you not think she is as handsome as the other?

SGAN. Certainly. (*Aside.*) Another fresh morsel.

D. JU. (*To Charlotte.*) Whence this pleasant meeting, fair one? What? are there in these rural spots, amongst these trees and rocks, persons as handsome as you are?

CHAR. As you see, sir.

D. JU. Do you belong to this village?

CHAR. Yes, sir.

D. JU. And do you live there?

CHAR. Yes, sir.

D. JU. What is your name?

CHAR. Charlotte, at your service.

D. JU. Ah! what a beauty! what piercing eyes!

CHAR. Sir, you make me quite ashamed.

D. JU. Oh! do not be ashamed to hear the truth. What do you say, Sganarelle? Can anything be more agreeable? Turn about a little, please. Oh! what a fine shape. Hold up your head a little, pray. Oh! what a pretty face is this! Open your eyes wide. Oh! how lovely they are. Pray let me see your teeth. Oh! how love-inspiring! And those provoking lips! For my part, I am delighted; I never beheld so charming a person.

CHAR. Sir, you are pleased to say so; I do not know whether you make fun of me.

D. JU. I make fun of you! Heaven forbid! I love you too well for that; I speak to you from the bottom of my heart.

CHAR. I am very much obliged to you if it is so.

D. JU. Not at all; you are not obliged to me for anything I say; you owe it to your beauty alone.

CHAR. Sir, all these words are too fine for me; I have not wit enough to answer you.

D. JU. Sganarelle, just cast a glance on her hands.

CHAR. Fie, sir! they are as black as anything.

D. Ju. Oh! what are you saying? They are the fairest in the world; pray, allow me to kiss them.

Char. You do me too much honor, sir, and if I had known it just now, I would not have failed to have washed them with bran.

D. Ju. Pray, tell me, pretty Charlotte, are you married?

Char. No, sir, but I am to be very soon, to Pierrot, our neighbor Simonetta's son.

D. Ju. What! should a person like you become the wife of a simple clod-hopper! No, no! that would be a profanation of so much beauty; you were not born to pass your whole life in a village. No doubt you deserve a better fate; Heaven, which very well knows this, has led me hither on purpose to prevent this match, and to do justice to your charms; for, in short, beauteous Charlotte, I love you with all my heart; it only depends upon yourself whether I shall carry you off from this wretched place, and put you in the position you deserve. This passion is doubtless very sudden; but what then; it is owing to your great beauty; I love you as much in one quarter of an hour as I would another in six months.

Char. Really, I do not know what to do when you speak. What you say pleases me, and I should very much like to believe you; but I have always been told that we must never believe gentlemen, and that you, courtiers, are cozeners who think of nothing but of making fools of young girls.

D. Ju. I am not one of these.

Sgan. Not at all! Not at all!

Char. Look ye, sir, there is no pleasure in being imposed upon. I am but a poor country-wench, but I value honor above everything; I would sooner die than lose my honor.

D. Ju. I have a soul so wicked as to impose on such a person as you! I should be so base as to dishonor you! No, no, I am too conscientious for that. I love you, Charlotte, virtuously and honorably; and to show you that I speak the truth, be convinced that I have no other design than to marry you. Can you have any greater proof? Here I am ready, whenever you please, and I call this fellow to be a witness of the promise which I make you.

Sgan. No, no, never fear. He will marry you as much as you please.

D. Ju. Ah! Charlotte, I plainly perceive you do not yet know me. You do me great wrong in judging of me by others; and if there are rogues in the world, people who only endeavor to make fools of young women, you ought not to consider me one of them, and never doubt the sincerity of my love; besides, your beauty is a guarantee for everything. When a woman is as handsome as you are she ought never to entertain such fears; believe me, you do not look as if you could be made a fool of. As for me, I protest I would stab myself a thousand times to the heart if I fostered the least thought of betraying you.

Char. Good heavens! I do not know whether you speak the truth or not; but you make people believe you.

D. Ju. You do me justice most certainly by believing me; I repeat anew the promise which I have made you. Do you not accept it? Will you not consent to become my wife?

Char. Yes, provided my aunt has no objection.

D. Ju. Give me your hand then upon it, Charlotte, since you do not object.

CHAR. But at the very least, sir, pray, do not deceive me; it would be a sin, and you see how honestly I act.

D. JU. What! you seem to doubt still my sincerity! Would you have me swear the most frightful oaths? May Heaven . . .

CHAR. Bless me, do not swear, I believe you.

D. JU. Give me one little kiss, then, as a pledge of your promise.

CHAR. Nay, sir, pray, wait till we are married, and then I shall kiss you as much as you wish.

D. JU. Well, pretty Charlotte, I will do whatever you please; only give me your hand, and let me, by a thousand kisses, express the rapture I am in . . .

SCENE III.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, PIERROT, CHARLOTTE.

PIER. (*Getting between them and pushing away Don Juan.*) Gently, sir, if you please, you are getting too warm; you may get a pleurisy.

D. JU. (*Pushing away Pierrot roughly.*) What brings this impertinent fellow here?

PIER. (*Placing himself between Don Juan and Charlotte.*) Hold hard, sir, you must not kiss our wives that are to be.

D. JU. (*Pushing Pierrot again away.*) Ha! what a noise!

PIER. 'Sdeath! People are not to be pushed thus.

CHAR. (*Taking Pierrot by the arm.*) Let him alone, Pierrot.

PIER. What! let him alone? I will not, not I!

D. JU. Hah!

PIER. Drat it, because you are a gentleman, you come here to caress our wives under our very noses! Go and kiss your own.

D. JU. What?

PIER. What? (*Don Juan gives him a box on the ear.*) Darn it, do not strike me; (*another.*) Hang it! (*another.*) Zounds! (*another.*) 'Sblood and wounds! it is not fair to beat people! Is this my reward for saving you from being drowned?

CHAR. Do not be angry, Pierrot.

PIER. I will be angry; and you are a hussy, to let him cozen you.

CHAR. Oh, Pierrot! it is not as you think. This gentleman will marry me, and you should not be in a passion.

PIER. Ha! But you are engaged to me.

CHAR. That makes no matter, Pierrot. If you love me, should ye not be glad that I am to be made a madam?

PIER. No, I would as soon see you hanged as see you another's.

CHAR. Come, come, Pierrot, do not fret yourself. If I am a madam I shall make you gain something; you shall serve us with butter and cheese.

PIER. Zounds! I shall never serve you with anything, even if you would pay me twice as much. Do not listen thus to what he says. 'Sfish, had I known this just now, I should not have taken him out of the water at all, but I would have given him a good rap upon the head with my oar.

D. Ju. (*Coming up to Pierrot to strike him.*) What is that you say?

Pier. (*Getting behind Charlotte.*) Drat it! I fear no man.

D. Ju. (*Coming towards him.*) Let me only get hold of you.

Pier. (*Gets on the other side of Charlotte.*) I do not care, not I.

D. Ju. (*Running after him.*) We shall try that.

Pier. (*Getting anew behind Charlotte.*) I have seen many a man as good as you.

D. Ju. What?

Sgan. Oh, sir, let the poor wretch alone. It is a pity to beat him. (*Placing himself between Don Juan and Pierrot, and addressing the latter.*) Harkee, my poor lad, move off, and do not talk to him.

Pier. (*Passing before Sganarelle, and looking boldly at Don Juan.*) I will talk to him.

D. Ju. (*Lifts up his hand and intends to give Pierrot a box on the ear.*) Ha! I shall teach you. (*Pierrot ducks down his head, so that Sganarelle receives it.*)

Sgan. (*Looking at Pierrot.*) Plague take the booby!

D. Ju. (*To Sganarelle.*) That is a reward for your charity.

Pier. Zounds! I shall go and tell her aunt of all her goings-on.

SCENE IV.—Don Juan, Charlotte, Sganarelle.

D. Ju. (*To Charlotte.*) At last I am going to be the happiest of men, and I would not change my happiness for all the world could give me. What pleasures shall we have, when you are my wife, and what . . .

SCENE V.—Don Juan, Charlotte, Mathurine, Sganarelle.

Sgan. (*Perceiving Mathurine.*) So, so.

Math. (*To Don Juan.*) Sir, what are you doing there with Charlotte? Are you courting her too?

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) No; on the contrary she told me she wished to be my wife, and I told her I was engaged to you.

Char. (*To Don Juan.*) What is that Mathurine wants with you?

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) She is jealous of my speaking to you, and would like me to marry her; but I tell her it is you whom I wish to have.

Math. What! Charlotte . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) All you can say to her will be of no use; she took this into her head.

Char. What then, Mathurine . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) It is in vain to talk to her, you will not get this whim out of her head.

Math. Would you . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) There is no possibility of making her listen to reason.

Char. I should like . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) She is as obstinate as the devil.

Math. Really . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) Do not say anything to her, she is a fool.

Char. I think . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) Let her alone, she is silly.

Math. No, no, I must speak to her.

Char. I will hear some of her reasons.

Math. What . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) I will lay you a wager that she tells you that I promised to marry her.

Char. I . . .

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) I will bet you anything that she will maintain that I have given her my word to make her my wife.

Math. Hark you, Charlotte, it is not right to meddle with other folks' bargains.

Char. It is not polite to be jealous because the gentleman speaks to me.

Math. The gentleman saw me first.

Char. If he saw you first, he saw me second, and has promised to marry me.

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) Well, did I not tell you so?

Math. (*To Charlotte.*) Your humble servant, it was me and not you whom he promised to marry.

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) Did I not guess right?

Char. You may tell that to others if you please, but not to me; it was me he promised to marry, I tell you.

Math. You make fun of folks; once more it was me he promised to marry.

Char. There he is; he can tell you whether I am right.

Math. There he is; he can give me the lie if I do not speak the truth.

Char. Did you promise to marry her?

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) You are joking.

Math. Is it true, sir, that you have given your word to be her husband?

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) Could you entertain such a thought?

Char. You see she affirms it.

D. Ju. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) Let her alone.

Math. You are witness how positive she is.

D. Ju. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) Let her say what she likes.

Char. No, no, we must know the truth.

Math. We must have it decided.

Char. Yes, Mathurine, I will have the gentleman show you your mistake.[10]

Math. Yes, Charlotte, I will have the gentleman make you look foolish.[11]

Char. Decide the quarrel, sir, if you please.

Math. Satisfy us, sir.

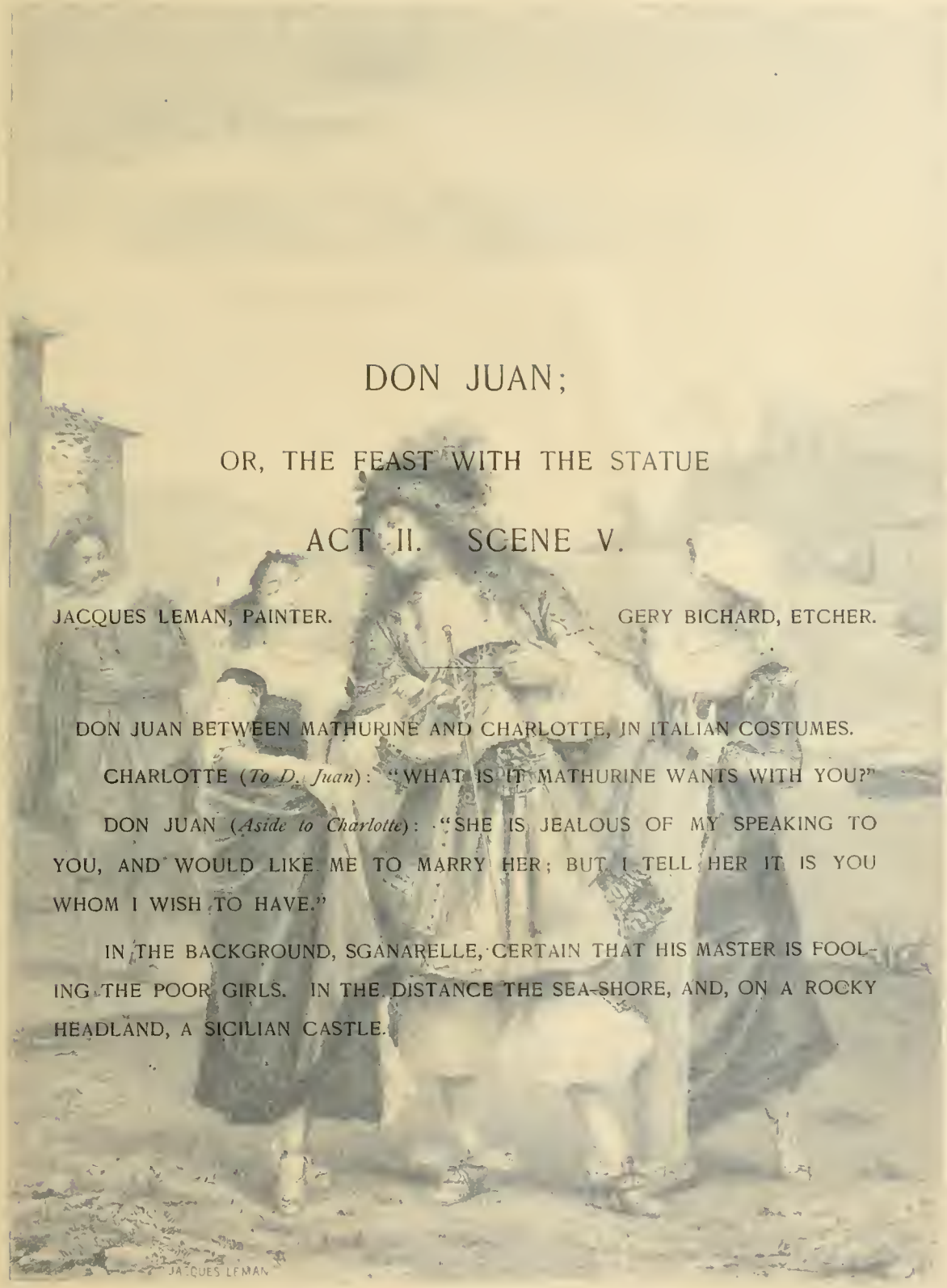
Char. You shall see.

Math. And you shall see too.

Char. (*To Don Juan.*) Speak.

Math. (*To Don Juan.*) Speak.

D. Ju. What would you have me say? You both maintain that I have promised to marry you. Does not each of you know the whole business without any necessity for me giving any more explanations? Why should you oblige me to repeat what I have said? Has not the person to whom I really gave the promise sufficient reasons within herself to laugh at what the other says; and ought she to trouble herself, provided I keep my promise? All the speeches do not forward affairs; we must act and not talk, and facts prove more than words. Therefore, that is the only way in which I shall satisfy you, and when I marry, you shall see which of you two has my heart. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) Let her believe what she will. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) Let her flatter herself in her own imagination. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) I adore you. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) I am entirely yours. (*Aside to Mathurine.*) All faces are



DON JUAN;

OR, THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE

ACT II. SCENE V.

JACQUES LEMAN, PAINTER. GERY BICHARD, ETCHER.

DON JUAN BETWEEN MATHURINE AND CHARLOTTE, IN ITALIAN COSTUMES.

CHARLOTTE (*To D. Juan*): "WHAT IS IT MATHURINE WANTS WITH YOU?"

DON JUAN (*Aside to Charlotte*): "SHE IS JEALOUS OF MY SPEAKING TO YOU, AND WOULD LIKE ME TO MARRY HER; BUT I TELL HER IT IS YOU WHOM I WISH TO HAVE."

IN THE BACKGROUND, SGANARELLE, CERTAIN THAT HIS MASTER IS FOOLING THE POOR GIRLS. IN THE DISTANCE THE SEA-SHORE, AND, ON A ROCKY HEADLAND, A SICILIAN CASTLE.

Do not

Aside to

I will lay you

that she tells you that I promised to

I . . .

(*Aside to*

that I have

my word

wife.

Mark you.

right

her folks

MATH. Is it true, sir, that you have given your word to be her husband?

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D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) Let her alone.

MATH. You see what positive she is.

D. JU. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) Let her say what she likes.

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MATH. And you shall see too.

Speak.

DON JUAN.

You

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JACQUES LEMAN

ugly in comparison with yours. (*Aside to Charlotte.*) When a man has once seen you he cannot bear to look at others. (*Aloud to both.*) I have some trifling message to deliver; I shall be back again in a quarter of an hour.[12]

SCENE VI.—CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

CHAR. (*To Mathurine.*) I am the one he loves, however.

MATH. (*To Charlotte.*) He will marry me.

SGAN. (*Stopping Charlotte and Mathurine.*) Ah! poor girls, I pity your innocence. I cannot bear to see you run thus to your destruction. Believe me both, do not be imposed upon by the stories he tells you, but stay in your village.

SCENE VII.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. (*In the background, aside.*) I would fain know why Sganarelle does not follow me.

SGAN. My master is a knave; he only wishes to make fools of you; he has made fools of a good many others; he marries the whole sex, and . . . (*Seeing Don Juan.*) It is false, and whoever tells you this you may tell him he lies. My master does not marry the whole sex; he is no knave; he does not intend to deceive you, nor has he ever made a fool of anyone. Oh, stay! here he is; ask him himself.

D. JU. (*Looking at Sganarelle, and suspecting him of having said something.*) Yes!

SGAN. Sir, as the world is full of backbiters, I was beforehand with them; and I was telling these girls that if anybody should say anything wrong of you they ought not to believe him, and be sure to tell him that he lied.

D. JU. Sganarelle!

SGAN. (*To Charlotte and Mathurine.*) Yes, my master is an honorable man; I warrant him such.

D. JU. Hem!

SGAN. They are impertinent rascals.

SCENE VIII.—DON JUAN, LA RAMÉE, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

LA R. (*Aside to Don Juan.*) Sir, I come to tell you that it is not quite safe for you to be here.

D. JU. How so?

LA R. Twelve men on horseback are in search of you; they will be here in a moment. I do not know how they have followed you; but I have learned these tidings from a countryman of whom they inquired, and to whom they described you. As there is no time to lose, the sooner you leave here the better.

SCENE IX.—DON JUAN, CHARLOTTE, MATHURINE, SGANARELLE.

D. JU. (*To Charlotte and Mathurine.*) Urgent business obliges me to leave this place, but I entreat you to remember the promise which I made you; depend upon it, you shall hear from me before to-morrow evening.

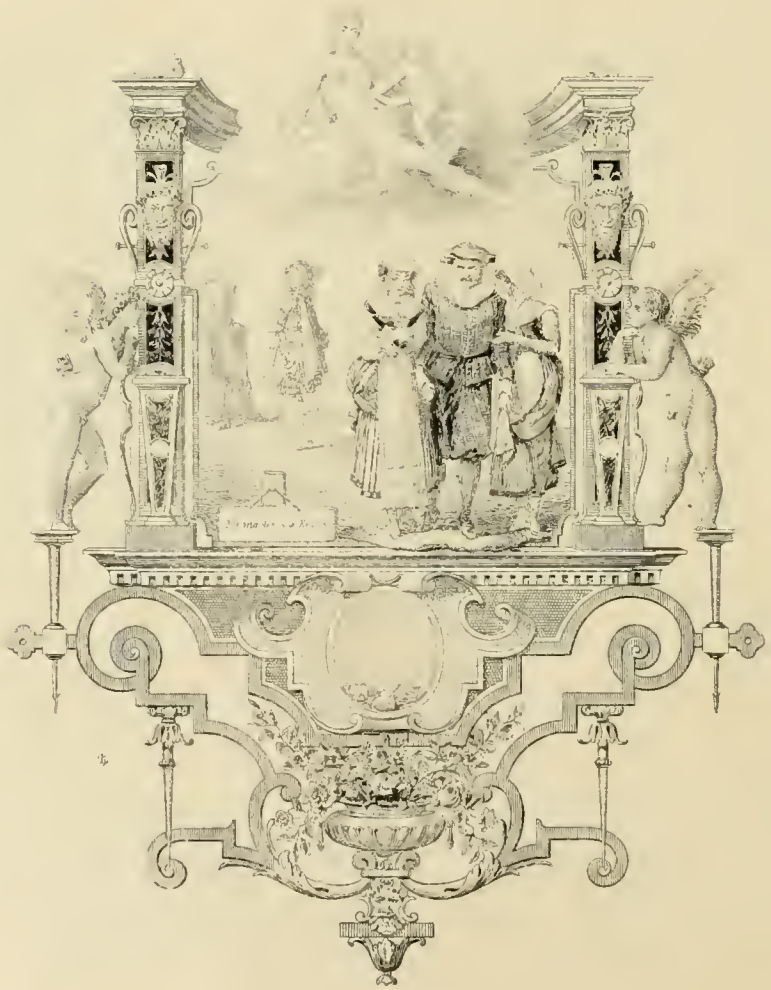
SCENE X.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Ju. As we are unequally matched we must make use of a stratagem, and cleverly escape from the misfortune that pursues me. Sganarelle, you shall put on my clothes, and I . . .

Sgan. Sir, you are joking. To expose me to be killed in your clothes, and . . .

D. Ju. Make haste, I do you too much honor. Happy is the servant who has the glory of dying for his master.

Sgan. Thank you for such an honor. (*Alone.*) As it is a case of death, grant me the favor, oh Heaven, not to be taken for another.



ACT III.

SCENE I.—(*A Forest.*)—Don Juan, *dressed as a country gentleman*, Sganarelle, *as a physician.*

Sgan. Upon my word, sir, acknowledge that I was right, and that we are both wonderfully well disguised. Your first plan would by no means have been opportune; this conceals us much better than what you would have done.

D. Ju. It is true, you look very well; I cannot imagine where you have unearthed this ridiculous apparel.

Sgan. Yes! It is the dress of an old physician which was left in pawn in the place where I got it, and it cost me some money to have it. But do you know, sir, that this dress has already obtained me some consideration; that the people I meet bow to me, and that they come to consult me as an able man?

D. Ju. How?

Sgan. Five or six countrymen and countrywomen, seeing me pass, came to ask my advice upon different diseases.

D. Ju. You answered that you knew nothing of the matter?

Sgan. I? Not at all. I wished to keep up the honor of my dress; I speechified about the disease, and gave each of them a prescription.

D. Ju. And what remedy did you prescribe?

Sgan. Upon my word, sir, I picked them up where I could. I prescribed at random; it would be a funny thing if the patients should get cured, and come to thank me.

D. Ju. And why not? Why should you not have the same privileges as all other physicians? They have no more to do with the recovery of their patients than you have, and all their art is mere pretense. They do nothing but get honor if they succeed; and you may take advantage, as they do, of a patient's good luck, and see attributed to your remedies what is owing to a lucky chance and the powers of nature.[13]

Sgan. What, sir? You are also an unbeliever in medicine?

D. Ju. It is one of the greatest errors of mankind.[14]

Sgan. What! you have no belief in senna, cassia, or antimonial wine?[15]

D. Ju. And why would you have me believe in them?

Sgan. You are of a very unbelieving temper. Yet you know how, of late, great noise has been made about antimonial wine? The miracles it has produced have converted the most incredulous minds; and it is but three weeks ago since I myself, who am speaking to you, saw a marvelous effect of it.

D. Ju. What?

Sgan. There was a man who, for six days, was dying; they did not know what more to prescribe for him, and all the remedies produced no effect; at last the doctors took it into their heads to give him an emetic.

D. Ju. He recovered, did he not?

Sgan. No, he died.

D. Ju. The effect is admirable.

Sgan. I should say so! He could not die for six whole days, and that made him die at once. Could you have anything more efficacious?

D. Ju. You are right.

Sgan. But let us drop physic, in which you do not believe, and talk of other things; for this dress inspires me, and I feel in the humor of disputing with you. You know you allow me to dispute, and forbid me only to remonstrate.

D. Ju. Well?

Sgan. I would fain know your innermost thoughts. Is it possible that you do not believe at all in Heaven?

D. Ju. Let us leave that alone.

Sgan. That means no. And in hell?

D. Ju. Eh!

Sgan. The same thing over again. And in the devil, if you please?

D. Ju. Yes, yes.

Sgan. Very little also. Do you not believe in a life after this?

D. Ju. Ha! ha! ha!

Sgan. I shall have some trouble in converting this man. Tell me what do you think of the *moine bourru?*[16] Eh?

D. Ju. A plague on the fool!

Sgan. That is what I cannot bear; for nothing can be more true than the *moine bourru.* I will be hanged if it is not true! People must believe something in this world. What do you believe?

D. Ju. What do I believe?

Sgan. Yes.

D. Ju. I believe that two and two are four, Sganarelle, and that twice four are eight.

Sgan. A fine belief, and nice articles of faith! As far as I can see, your religion is arithmetic. It cannot be denied that strange follies run in the heads of men, and that those who have studied are often not the wiser for it. As for me, sir, thank Heaven! I have not studied as you have, and no one can boast of ever having taught me anything; but with my small amount of sense, and my little judgment, I can see things more clearly than all books, and I can very well understand that this world which we behold has not sprung up of itself in one night, like a mushroom. I should like to ask you who has created these trees, these rocks, this earth, and this sky above us; and if all this has sprung up of itself. There you are; I take you as an example; there you are: did you make yourself alone, and was not your father obliged to sleep with your mother to make you? Can you see all the inventions of which the human machine is composed without wondering how the one influences the other? these nerves, these bones, these veins, these arteries, these . . . this lung, this heart, this liver, and all these other ingredients to be found there, and which . . . Oh, Lord! interrupt me, if you please. I cannot argue unless I am interrupted. You do not say a single word on purpose, and allow me to go on out of spite.

D. Ju. I am waiting for your arguments to be finished.

Sgan. My arguments are that there exists something admirable in man, whatever you may say, which all the philosophers cannot explain. Is it not marvelous that I am here, and that I have something in my head which thinks a hundred different things in one moment, and does with my body all that it wishes to do? I wish to clasp my hands, to lift up my arm, to raise my eyes towards Heaven, to bend my head, to move my feet, to go to the right, to the left, forwards, backwards, turn . . . (*He falls down whilst turning round.*)

D. Ju. There is an end of all our arguing.

Sgan. Zounds! I am a fool to amuse myself in arguing with you; believe what you like; it does not matter a straw to me whether you are damned!

D. Ju. I believe that whilst arguing we have lost our way. Call that man we see yonder, and let us ask him our road.[17]

SCENE II.—Don Juan, Sganarelle, A Poor Man.

Sgan. Hullo! ho! I say, you man! ho! my good fellow! friend, a word with you, pray. Show us the way to the town.

Poor M. You have only to follow that path, gentlemen, and turn to the right when you come to the end of the forest! but I warn you to be upon your guard, for there have been robbers about for some time.

D. Ju. I am much obliged to you, friend, and thank you with all my heart.

Poor M. If you would kindly assist me, sir, with some trifle?

D. Ju. Ha, ha! your advice is interested, I see.

Poor M. I am a poor man, sir, living alone in this forest these ten years; and I shall

pray to Heaven to grant you all kinds of prosperity.

D. Ju. Pray Heaven to give you a coat, and do not trouble yourself about other people's business.

Sgan. My good man, you do not know this gentleman; he only believes that two and two make four, and that twice four are eight.

D. Ju. What is your occupation among these trees?

Poor M. To pray to Heaven for the prosperity of all kind people who give me something.

D. Ju. You are pretty well off, then?

Poor M. Alas! sir, I am as poor as poor can be.

D. Ju. You are joking: a man who prays to Heaven every day must be very well off.

Poor M. I assure you, sir, that frequently I have not even a piece of bread to eat.

D. Ju. That is strange; your assiduity is ill rewarded. Ha, ha! I am going to give you directly a piece of gold, provided you swear a round oath.

Poor M. Oh! sir, would you wish me to commit such a sin?

D. Ju. Will you gain a piece of gold? yes or no. Here is one for you, if you swear. There; now swear.

Poor M. Sir . . .

D. Ju. Unless you swear, you shall not get it.

Sgan. Well, well; swear ever so little; there is no harm in it.

D. Ju. Take it; here it is; take it, I tell you; but swear.

Poor M. No, sir, I would rather die of hunger.

D. Ju. There, there; I give you this piece of gold because you are a human being.[18] (*Looking into the forest.*) But what do I see? One man attacked by three! The match is too unequal, and I ought not to allow so base an action. (*He draws his sword and hastens to the spot where the attack was going on.*)

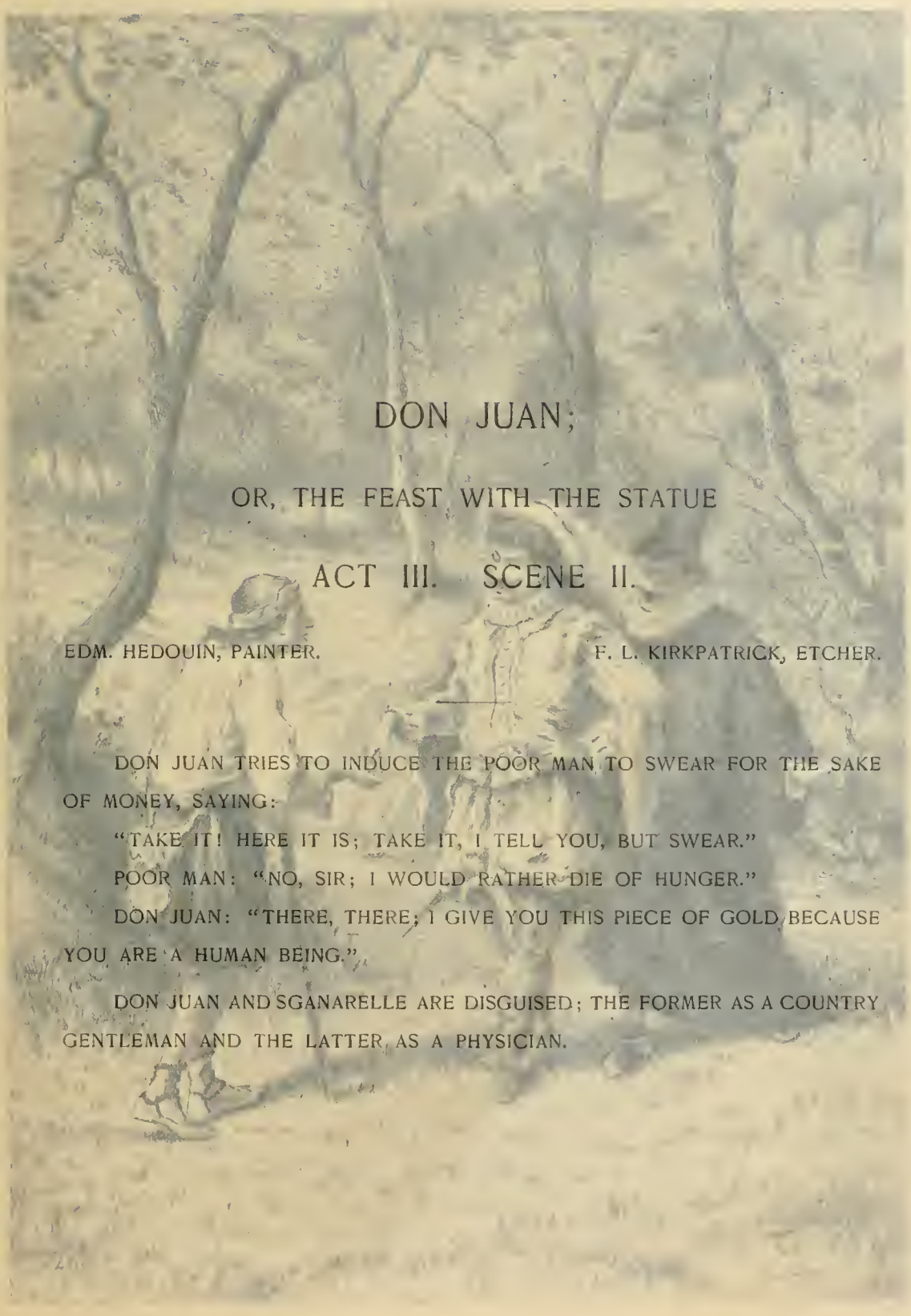
SCENE III.—Sganarelle (*Alone*).

My master is truly mad to run unsought into danger. But, upon my word his assistance has been of some use; the two have put the three to flight.

SCENE IV.—Don Juan, Don Carlos, Sganarelle (*in the background*).

D. Car. (*Putting up his sword.*) The flight of these robbers shows me what I owe to your arm. Allow me, sir, to return you thanks for so generous an action, and let . . .

D. Ju. I have done nothing, sir, but what you would have done in my place. Such adventures touch our honor; the action of these rogues was so cowardly, that it would have been taking part with them not to have opposed them. But how fell you into their hands?



DON JUAN;

OR, THE FEAST WITH THE STATUE

ACT III. SCENE II.

EDM. HEDOUIN, PAINTER. F. L. KIRKPATRICK, ETCHER.

DON JUAN TRIES TO INDUCE THE POOR MAN TO SWEAR FOR THE SAKE OF MONEY, SAYING:

"TAKE IT! HERE IT IS; TAKE IT, I TELL YOU, BUT SWEAR."

POOR MAN: "NO, SIR; I WOULD RATHER DIE OF HUNGER."

DON JUAN: "THERE, THERE; I GIVE YOU THIS PIECE OF GOLD BECAUSE YOU ARE A HUMAN BEING."

DON JUAN AND SGANARELLE ARE DISGUISED; THE FORMER AS A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN AND THE LATTER AS A PHYSICIAN.

grant you all kinds of

Heaven to give you a coat, and trouble yourself about her people's

Sgan. My good man, you do not know this gentleman; he only believes that two and two make four, and that twice four are eight.

D. Ju. What is your occupation among these trees?

Poor M. To pray to Heaven for the prosperity of all kind people who give me something.

D. Ju. You are pretty well off, then?

Poor M. Alas! sir, as poor as one can be.

D. Ju. You are joking; one who prays to Heaven every day must be

Poor M. I assure you, sir, that frequently I have not even a piece of bread to eat.

D. Ju. That is strange; your assiduity is ill rewarded. Ha, ha! I am going to give you directly a piece of gold, provided you

Poor M. Oh! sir, would you wish me to commit such a sin?

D. Ju. Will you gain a piece of gold? yes, or no. Here, there, now swear.

Poor M. Sir . . .

D. Ju. Unless you swear, you shall not

Sgan. Well, well; swear ever so little; there is no harm in it.

D. Ju. Take it; here it is; take it, I tell you; but swear.

Poor M. No, sir, I would rather die of hunger.

D. Ju. There, there, I give you this piece of gold because you are a human being.[18]

(*Looking into the forest.*) But what do I see? One man attacked by three! The match is too unequal, and I ought not to allow so base an action. (*He draws his sword and hastens to the spot where the attack was going on.*)

SCENE III.—Sganarelle (*Alone*).

My master is truly mad to run unsought into danger. But, upon my word his assistance has been of some use; the two have put

D. Car. By chance I strayed from my brother and all our retinue; and whilst I was endeavoring to rejoin them, I fell in with these robbers, who immediately killed my horse, and would have done as much for me, had it not been for your valor.

D. Ju. Do you intend to go towards the town?

D. Car. Yes, but I do not intend to go into it; my brother and I are obliged to roam about on account of one of those sad affairs which compel noblemen to sacrifice themselves and their families to their untarnished honor; it is ever fatal, even if we do succeed; if we do not lose our life, we are compelled to leave the kingdom. This is the reason why I think it unfortunate to be a nobleman, for however discreetly and honestly he may live himself, he cannot prevent the laws of honor from connecting him with the disgraceful conduct of other people, nor from having his life, repose, and property depend upon the whims of the first audacious fellow who takes it into his head to do him one of those injuries for which a gentleman must lose his life.

D. Ju. There is, however, this advantage, that those who take it into their head to offend us out of mere wantonness run the same risks, and spend their time just as uncomfortably. But if I am not indiscreet, may I ask what this sad affair is?

D. Car. It has gone so far that the secret can no longer be kept. When the insult is once public, our honor does not oblige us to conceal our shame, but openly to blazon forth our vengeance, and even to proclaim that we intend to avenge ourselves. Therefore, sir, I have no scruples in telling you that the offense which we wish to avenge is the seduction of a sister, who was carried off from a convent, and that the author of this offense is Don Juan Tenorio, son of Don Louis Tenorio. We have been in search for him for some days, and we have followed him this morning, upon the information of a servant, who told us that he had gone out on horseback, with four or five others, and that he had taken this route; but all our pains have been useless, and we cannot discover what has become of him.

D. Ju. Do you know this Don Juan, sir, of whom you speak?

D. Car. No, sir, I do not. I never saw him, and I have only heard my brother describe him; but his reputation is none of the best; he is a man whose life . . .

D. Ju. Stop, sir, if you please. He is rather a friend of mine, and it would be base in me to allow any one to speak ill of him.

D. Car. Out of respect for you, sir, I shall say nothing of him. As you have saved my life, certainly the least thing I can do is not to speak before you of one of your acquaintances, when I can say nothing but evil of him. But however much his friend you may be, I venture to hope that you will not approve of this action of his, or think it strange that we should endeavor to avenge ourselves.

D. Ju. On the contrary, I will serve you in this, and spare you some fruitless trouble. I am Don Juan's friend, I cannot help being so; but it is not right that he should offend gentlemen with impunity, and I promise you in his name that he shall give you satisfaction.

D. Car. And what satisfaction can he give for these sorts of injuries?

D. Ju. All that your honor can desire; and, without giving you any further trouble to look for Don Juan, I engage that he shall be forthcoming wherever you like, when you please.

D. Car. This is very pleasant news, sir, to outraged hearts; but after what I owe you, it would be very painful to me, if you were to be one of the combatants.

D. Ju. I am so intimately connected with Don Juan that he cannot fight unless I must fight too; but I answer for him as for myself, and you have only to say when you wish to meet him, and give you satisfaction.

D. Car. How cruel is my lot! Must I owe my life to you, and Don Juan be one of your friends?

SCENE V.—Don Alonzo, Don Carlos, Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Al. (*Speaking to his retinue, without seeing Don Carlos or Don Juan.*) Give some water to my horses, and then lead them after us; I shall walk a little. (*Seeing them both.*) Heavens! what do I see? What! brother, you are in conversation with our mortal enemy?

D. Car. Our mortal enemy?

D. Ju. (*Clapping his hand to his sword.*) Yes, I am myself, Don Juan; and your superior number shall not force me to wish to disown my name.

D. Al. (*Drawing his sword.*) Ah! traitor, you must die, and . . . (*Sganarelle runs away and hides himself.*)

D. Car. Stay, brother. I owe my life to him; and had he not come to my assistance, the robbers whom I encountered would have killed me.

D. Al. And would you allow this consideration to prevent our vengeance? Whatever service the hand of an enemy may render us, it ought to have no influence upon our heart; if we are to measure the obligation by the injury, then your gratitude, brother, is in this case ridiculous; for honor is infinitely more precious than life, and therefore we owe nothing when we owe our life to him who has taken away our honor.

D. Car. I know the difference, brother, that a gentleman ought always to make between the one and the other; and gratitude for the obligation does not efface within me resentment for the injury; but allow me to give back to him on this very spot what he has lent me; let me repay him immediately the life I owe him, by delaying our vengeance, and by allowing him the liberty of enjoying, for a few days, the benefit of this kind action to me.

D. Al. No, no, we run the risk of not wreaking our vengeance if we delay it, and the opportunity of taking it may never come again. Heaven offers it to us now, and we ought not to let it pass. When honor is mortally wounded, we should not think of keeping any moderation; if you do not like to engage personally in this action, you need only retire, and leave to my arm the glory of such a sacrifice.

D. Car. Pray, brother . . .

D. Al. All further conversation is unnecessary; he must die.

D. Car. Hold, I say, brother. I will not allow any attempt upon his life; and I swear by Heaven that I shall defend him here against any and every one; that very life which he has saved shall always guard him; if you attempt to kill him, you must first pierce me.

D. Al. What! you side with our enemy against me; and, instead of feeling the same

rage on beholding him as I do, you show feelings full of gentleness!

D. Car. Brother, let us show moderation in a lawful action; and not avenge our honor with so much violence. Let us master our courage; let us show valor without ferocity, which only proceeds from mature deliberation and reason, not from the impulse of a blind rage. I will not remain in debt, brother, to my enemy; I am under an obligation to him, which I must repay before I do anything else. Our revenge will not be the less exemplary for being deferred; on the contrary, it will be the greater; and the opportunity we have had of taking it, will make it appear more just in the eyes of the whole world.

D. Al. O, the strange weakness and dreadful blindness of thus hazarding the interests of our honor for the ridiculous idea of a fanciful obligation!

D. Car. No, brother, do not trouble yourself about that. If I commit a fault, I shall make amends for it, and take care of our honor; I know to what it obliges us, and this delay of one day, which my gratitude asks for him, will only augment my desire to satisfy it. You see, Don Juan, how anxious I am to return you the favor I have received; by this you can judge of the consequences; rest assured that I discharge with the same warmth what I owe, and that I shall not be the less punctual in repaying you the insult than the kindness. I will not oblige you to express your sentiments now; I allow you to think at your leisure about what you are resolved to do. You very well know the great injury you have done us; you shall yourself judge what reparation it demands. There are peaceful means of giving us satisfaction; there are violent and bloody ones; but finally, whatever choice you may make, you have passed me your word to let Don Juan give me satisfaction. Pray, mind to do so, and remember that, out of this place, my only duty is for my honor.

D. Ju. I have asked nothing of you, and shall keep my promise.

D. Car. Come, brother, a moment's forbearance does not injure the severity of our duty.

SCENE VI.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Ju. Hullo! hey! Sganarelle!

Sgan. (*Coming out of a place where he had hid himself.*) What is your pleasure, sir?

D. Ju. How! scoundrel, you run away when I am attacked?

Sgan. I beg your pardon, sir; I was quite near. I believe that this gown is purgative, and that to wear it is as good as taking medicine.

D. Ju. Plague on your insolence! Hide your cowardice at least behind a more decent covering. Do you know who the gentleman is whose life I saved?

Sgan. I? No.

D. Ju. It is a brother of Elvira.

Sgan. A . . .

D. Ju. He is gentlemanly enough, and behaved pretty well; I am sorry I have a quarrel with him.

Sgan. It would be easy for you to arrange all things.

D. Ju. Yes, but my passion for Elvira is worn out, and it does not suit my mood to engage myself. You know I love liberty in love, and I cannot resolve to immure my heart between four walls. I have told you a score of times I have a natural propensity to give way to whatever attracts me. My heart belongs to the whole fair sex; and they must take it by turns, and keep it as long as they can. But what splendid edifice do I see amongst those trees?

Sgan. Do you not know it?

D. Ju. No, indeed.

Sgan. Why! it is the tomb which the Commander ordered to be built when you killed him.

D. Ju. Ha! you are right. I did not know that it was hereabout. Every one says it is wonderfully well done, and the statue of the Commander as well; I have a mind to go and see it.

Sgan. Do not go there, sir.

D. Ju. Why not?

Sgan. It is not courteous to go to pay a visit to a man whom you have killed.

D. Ju. On the contrary; I intend to be courteous by paying him a visit, which he ought to receive politely, if he is anything of a gentleman. Come, let us go in. (*The tomb opens, and discovers a splendid mausoleum and the statue of the Commander.*)

Sgan. Ah! how beautiful that is! what fine statues! what beautiful marble; what fine pillars! ah! how beautiful that is! What do you say of it, sir?

D. Ju. That the pride of a dead man cannot possibly go farther. What I think admirable is that a man, who, whilst he was alive, was satisfied with quite a plain abode, should desire so magnificent a one, when he has no longer occasion for it.

Sgan. Here is the statue of the Commander.

D. Ju. Zounds! he looks very well in the dress of a Roman emperor!

Sgan. Upon my word, sir, it is very well made. It seems as if he were alive, and going to speak. He looks at us in such a manner that it would frighten me if I were quite alone; I do not think he likes to see us.

D. Ju. He would be wrong; and it would be an unhandsome reception of the honor I do him. Ask him if he will come to take supper with me.

Sgan. That is a thing he has no occasion for, I believe.

D. Ju. Ask him, I say.

Sgan. You are jesting. It would be madness to go and speak to a statue.

D. Ju. Do what I bid you.

Sgan. How ridiculous! Mr. Commander . . . (*Aside.*) I laugh at my folly, but my master makes me do it. (*Aloud.*) Mr. Commander, my master, Don Juan, asks whether you will do him the honor to come to take supper with him. (*The statue nods its head.*) Ah!

D. Ju. What is the matter? What ails you? Tell me. Will you speak?

Sgan. (*Nodding his head like the statue.*) The statue . . .

D. Ju. Well, what do you mean, villain?

Sgan. I say that the statue . . .

D. Ju. Well! what of the statue? Speak, or I will break every bone in your body.

Sgan. The statue made a sign to me.

D. Ju. Plague take the rascal!

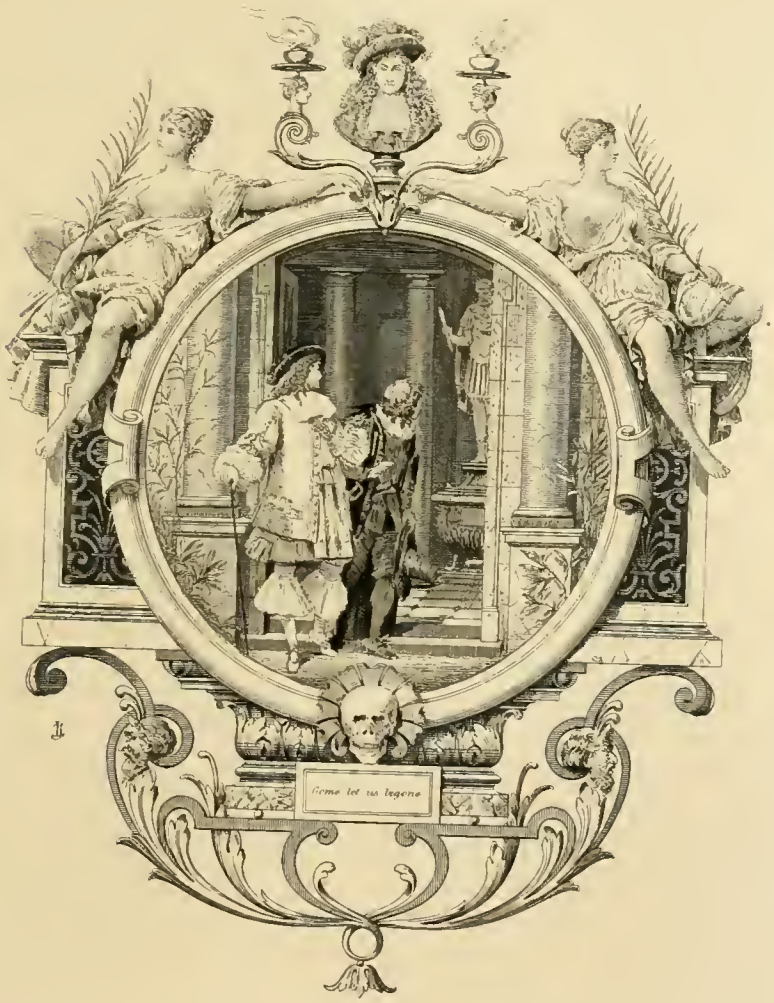
Sgan. I tell you it made a sign to me; there is nothing more true. Go and speak to him yourself, and then you will see. Perhaps . . .

D. Ju. Come, rogue, come. I will convict you clearly of cowardice. Observe. Will his Excellency the Commander come to take supper with me? (*The statue nods his head again.*)

Sgan. I would not take ten pistoles to see it again. Well, sir?

D. Ju. Come, let us begone.

Sgan. (*Alone.*) These are your free-thinkers who believe in nothing.



ACT IV.

SCENE I.—(*A Room in Don Juan's Palace.*)

DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, RAGOTIN.

D. JU. (*To Sganarelle.*) Be it as it will; let us drop it. It is but a trifle, and we may have been deceived by a false light, or surprised by some giddiness which disturbed our sight.

SGAN. Ah! sir, do not try to deny what we saw with our own eyes. Nothing can be more certain than that nod; I make no doubt that Heaven offended by your way of living has wrought this miracle to convince you, and to reclaim you from . . .

D. JU. Harkee. If you bother me any more with your foolish morality; if you say another word on that subject, I shall call one of the servants, send for a strong switch, have you held down by three or four men, and give you a thousand lashes. Do you understand me?[19]

SGAN. Very well, sir, perfectly well. You explain yourself clearly; that is one good thing in you that you never affect a roundabout way; you express yourself with wonderful plainness.[20]

D. JU. Come, let me have supper as soon as possible. A chair here, boy.

SCENE II.—Don Juan, Sganarelle, La Violette, Ragotin.

La V. Sir, here is one of your tradesmen, M. Dimanche, who wishes to speak to you.

Sgan. That is all right; we only wanted to be bothered by a creditor! What put it into his head to come to ask us for money? why did you not tell him that your master was not at home?

La V. I have been telling him so these three-quarters of an hour, but he would not believe me, and sat down within to wait.

Sgan. Let him wait as long as he likes.

D. Ju. No, on the contrary bid him come in. It is very bad policy to hide from your creditors. It is good to pay them something; and I possess the secret of sending them away satisfied without giving them a farthing.

SCENE III.—Don Juan, M. Dimanche, Sganarelle, La Violette, Ragotin.

D. Ju. Ha! M. Dimanche, come this way. How delighted I am to see you! And how angry I am that my people did not show you in immediately! I had given orders that I would not see anyone; but this order was not meant for you, and you have a right never to have the door shut against you in my house.

M. Dim. Sir, I am very much obliged to you.

D. Ju. (*To La Violette and Ragotin.*) Zounds! rascals, I shall teach you to leave M. Dimanche in the ante-chamber, and I shall let you know who is who.

M. Dim. Sir, it is not of the slightest consequence.

D. Ju. (*To M. Dimanche.*) What! to say I was not within, to M. Dimanche, my very best friend!

M. Dim. Sir, I am your servant; I came . . .

D. Ju. Here, quick, a seat for M. Dimanche.

M. Dim. Sir, I am very well as I am.

D. Ju. No, no; I will have you sit down by me.

M. Dim. It is not necessary.

D. Ju. Take away that stool, and bring an arm chair.

M. Dim. Sir, you are jesting, and . . .

D. Ju. No, no; I know what I owe you; and I will not allow them to make any difference between us two.

M. Dim. Sir . . .

D. Ju. Come, sit down.

M. Dim. There is no need for it, sir. I have only one word to say to you. I was . . .

D. Ju. Sit you down there, I say.

M. Dim. No, sir, I am very well. I come to . . .

D. Ju. No, I will not hear you if you do not sit down.

M. Dim. Sir, I do as you wish. I . . .

D. Ju. Upon my word, M. Dimanche, you look very well.

M. Dim. Yes, sir, at your service. I came to . . .

D. Ju. You have an admirable constitution, rosy lips, a ruddy complexion, and sparkling eyes.

M. Dim. I should be glad . . .

D. Ju. How is Mrs. Dimanche, your good lady?

M. Dim. Very well, sir, thank Heaven.

D. Ju. She is a good woman.

M. Dim. She is your humble servant, sir. I came . . .

D. Ju. And how is your little daughter, Claudine?

M. Dim. As well as possible.

D. Ju. What a pretty little girl she is! I love her with all my heart.

M. Dim. You do her too much honor, sir. I . . .

D. Ju. And does little Colin make as much noise as ever with his drum?

M. Dim. Always the same, sir. I . . .

D. Ju. And your little dog, Brusquet, does he still bark as loudly, and as lustily bite the legs of the people who visit you?

M. Dim. More than ever, sir; and we cannot break him off it.

D. Ju. Do not be surprised if I ask after your whole family; for I take a very great interest in them all.

M. Dim. We are infinitely obliged to you, sir. I . . .

D. Ju. (*Holding out his hand.*) Shake hands, then, M. Dimanche. Are you really a friend of mine?

M. Dim. Sir, I am your servant.

D. Ju. I' gad, I am yours with all my heart.

M. Dim. You do me too much honor. I . . .

D. Ju. There is nothing I would not do for you.

M. Dim. Sir, you are too kind.

D. Ju. And that without any motive, believe me.

M. Dim. I have certainly not deserved this favor. But, sir . . .

D. Ju. Nonsense! Come, Mr. Dimanche, will you take supper with me without any ceremony?

M. Dim. No, sir; I must return home immediately. I . . .

D. Ju. (*Rising.*) Here, quick, a candle to light Mr. Dimanche, and let four or five of my fellows take their blunderbusses to escort him.

M. Dim. (*Rising also.*) Sir, this is not necessary; I can very well go alone. But . . . (*Sganarelle quickly removes the chairs.*)

D. Ju. What? They shall escort you; I take too great an interest in you. I am your humble servant, and your debtor to boot.

M. Dim. Ah! sir . . .

D. Ju. I do not conceal it, and I tell it to everyone.

M. Dim. If . . .

D. Ju. Do you wish me to see you home?

M. Dim. Oh, sir! you jest. Sir . . .

D. Ju. Embrace me then, pray. Once more I desire you to be convinced that I am entirely yours, and that there is nothing in the world which I would not do to serve you.

SCENE IV.—M. Dimanche, Sganarelle.

Sgan. I must needs own that my master is a man who loves you much.

M. Dim. It is true; he is so polite to me, and pays me so many compliments, that I can never ask him for money.

Sgan. I assure you that his whole household would lay down their lives for you; and I wish something would happen to you, that somebody would take it into his head to cudgel you, then you should see how . . .

M. Dim. I believe it; but, Sganarelle, pray speak a word to him about my money.

Sgan. Oh! do not you trouble yourself about that, he will pay you as well as anyone.

M. Dim. But you, Sganarelle, you owe me something on your own account.

SGAN. Fie! do not speak of that.

M. DIM. What? I . . .

SGAN. Do I not know what I owe you?

M. DIM. Yes. But . . .

SGAN. Come, Mr. Dimanche, I am going to light you to the door.

M. DIM. But my money . . .

SGAN. (*Taking M. Dimanche by the arm.*) You are only jesting.

M. DIM. I wish to . . .

SGAN. (*Pulling him.*) Come.

M. DIM. I intend to . . .

SGAN. (*Pushing him towards the door.*) Fiddlesticks!

M. DIM. But . . .

SGAN. (*Pushing him again.*) Fie!

M. DIM. I . . .

SGAN. (*Pushing him quite off the stage.*) Fie, I say.[21]

SCENE V.—DON JUAN, SGANARELLE, LA VIOLETTE.

LA V. (*To Don Juan.*) Sir, here is your father.

D. JU. Oh! This completes the business! It wanted only this to drive me mad!

SCENE VI.—DON LOUIS, DON JUAN, SGANARELLE.

D. LOUIS. I see plainly that I disturb you, and that you could very easily have dispensed with my visit. It is true we are a thorn in one another's path, and if you are tired of seeing me, I am also very tired of your unruly behavior. Alas! how little do we know what we do, when we do not allow Heaven to judge what we need, when we wish to be wiser than it, and importune it by our blind wishes and inconsiderate demands! I most anxiously wished for a son; I incessantly prayed with incredible fervor for one; and this son, whom I obtained by wearying Heaven with my prayers is the plague and punishment of that very life, of which I thought he would be the joy and consolation! With what eye, do you think, can I behold the many unworthy actions, whose wickedness can hardly be palliated before the world, that continuance of disgraceful affairs which daily compels us to weary the goodness of our sovereign, and which has exhausted, in his opinion, the merit of my services, and the influence of my friends? Ah! what a mean spirit you have! Do you blush because you so little deserve your lofty birth? Tell me, pray, what right have you to be proud of it? and what have you done in this world that gives you a claim to be considered a nobleman? Do you think it is sufficient to bear the title and arms of one, and that it is any glory to be descended of noble blood, if one lives in infamy? No, no! Rank is nothing without virtue.[22] We have therefore no share in the glory of our ancestors, unless we strive to be like them; and the lustre which their actions reflect upon us, demands that we should do them like honor, follow in their footsteps, and not degenerate from their virtues, if we would be deemed their true descendants. Hence in vain are you born of lofty progenitors; they disown you as one of their race, and all the illustrious deeds that they have achieved confer no advantage upon you; on the contrary, their

renown only redounds to your discredit; and their glory is a shining light which renders clear to the eyes of all the infamy of your actions. Know, finally, that a nobleman who leads a wicked life is a monster in nature; that virtue is the prime badge of nobility; that I regard much less the name which a man bears than the actions which he commits, and that I should value more highly a porter's son who was an honest man, than a monarch's son who led such a life as yours.[23]

D. Ju. Sir, if you were to take a seat, you would speak more at your ease.

D. Louis. No, insolent wretch; I will neither take a seat nor speak any more, and I plainly perceive that all my words have no effect upon you; but learn, unworthy son, that by your actions you have worn out a father's love; that, sooner than you think, I shall put a stop to your irregularities, forestall the vengeance of Heaven, and by your punishment, blot out the shame of being your father.

SCENE VII.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Ju. (*Still addressing his father, although he has left.*) Why! die as soon as you can, it is the best thing you can possibly do. Every one must have his turn; it drives me mad to see fathers live as long as their children. (*He throws himself down in his arm-chair.*)

Sgan. Ah! sir, you are in the wrong.

D. Ju. (*Rising.*) I in the wrong?

Sgan. (*Trembling.*) Sir . . .

D. Ju. I in the wrong?[24]

Sgan. Yes, sir, you were wrong in having listened to what he said to you, and you ought to have turned him out by the shoulders. Did any one ever see anything more impertinent? A father to come and remonstrate with his son, and tell him to reform his ways, not to forget his lofty birth, to live the life of a respectable man, and a hundred other silly things of the same kind! Can a man like you, who knows how to live, stand such a thing as that? I wonder at your patience. Had I been in your place, I should have sent him about his business. (*Aside.*) O cursed complaisance, what do you bring me to?

D. Ju. Will supper be ready soon?

SCENE VIII.—Don Juan, Sganarelle, Ragotin.

Rag. Sir, a lady, with her face veiled, wishes to speak to you.

D. Ju. Who can that be?

Sgan. You must see.

SCENE IX.—Donna Elvira, *veiled*, Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Elv. Do not be surprised, Don Juan, to see me at this hour, and in this dress. An urgent motive obliges me to make you this visit; what I have to say will admit of no

delay. I do not come here possessed by that wrath I showed a little while ago; I am changed from what I was this morning. I am no longer that Donna Elvira who uttered imprecations against you, whose angry soul vented nothing but threats, and breathed only revenge. Heaven has banished from my heart all that unworthy passion which I entertained for you, all those tumultuous upheavings of a criminal attachment, all those shameful outbursts of an earthly and gross love; and it has left in my heart a flame which burns for you without any sensual affection, a tenderness entirely holy, a love detached from everything, which is not actuated by selfishness, and cares only for your good.

D. Ju. (*Whispering to Sganarelle.*) I think you weep?

Sgan. Excuse me.

D. Elv. It is this perfect and pure love which brings me hither for your sake, to impart to you a warning from Heaven, and endeavor to turn you away from that precipice whither you are hastening. Yes, Don Juan, I know all the irregularities of your life; and that same Heaven which has touched my heart, and made me see the errors of my own conduct, has inspired me to come to you, and to tell you in its name that your crimes have tired out its mercy, that its dreadful wrath is ready to fall upon you, that you can avoid this by a speedy repentance, and that perhaps not another day is left to save yourself from the greatest of all miseries. As for me, no earthly ties bind me any longer to you. Thanks be to Heaven, I have abandoned all foolish thoughts. I am resolved to retire into a nunnery; I only hope to live long enough to expiate the crime I have committed, and, by an austere penance, to deserve pardon for the blindness into which I have been plunged by the violence of a guilty passion. But, when I am retired from the world, it would greatly pain me if a person, whom I once tenderly loved, should be made an ominous example of the justice of Heaven; it will be an unspeakable delight to me if I can prevail upon you to ward off the dreadful blow that threatens you. I beseech you, Don Juan, grant me as a last favor this soothing consolation; refuse me not your own salvation, which I beg of you with tears; if you are not moved for your own sake, let at least my entreaties prevail, and spare me the terrible grief of seeing you condemned to eternal punishments.

Sgan. (*Aside.*) Poor lady!

D. Elv. I once loved you very tenderly; nothing in this world was so dear to me as you; I forgot my duty for your sake; I have done everything for you; all the reward I desire is that you should amend your life, and ward off your destruction. Save yourself, I beseech you, either for your own sake or mine. Once more, Don Juan, I beg it of you with tears; and if the tears of a person you once loved have no influence with you, I conjure you by everything that is most capable of moving you.

Sgan. (*Aside, looking to Don Juan.*) You have the feelings of a tiger.

D. Elv. I leave you now; that is all I had to say to you.

D. Ju. Madam, it is late, stay here. We shall give you as good a room as we can.

D. Elv. No, Don Juan, do not detain me longer.

D. Ju. Madam, you will oblige me by remaining, I assure you.

D. Elv. No, I tell you, let us not waste time in needless words. Let me go immediately; do not insist upon accompanying me, and think only of profiting by my advice.

SCENE X.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Ju. Do you know that I felt something stirring in my heart for her, that I was rather pleased with this strange unexpected adventure, and that her careless dress, her languishing air, and her tears, rekindled within me some small embers of an extinguished flame?

Sgan. That is as much as to say her words did not make any impression on you.

D. Ju. Supper, quickly.

Sgan. Very well.

SCENE XI.—Don Juan, Sganarelle, La Violette, Ragotin.

D. Ju. (*Sitting down at table.*) Sganarelle, we must really think of amending our lives.

Sgan. Ay, that we must!

D. Ju. Yes, upon my word, we must reform. Twenty or thirty years more of this life, and then we shall consider about it.

Sgan. Oh!

D. Ju. What do you say to that?

Sgan. Nothing. Here comes supper. (*He takes a bit from one of the dishes that was brought in, and puts it into his mouth.*)

D. Ju. Methinks you have a swollen cheek: what is the matter with it? Speak. What have you in your mouth?

Sgan. Nothing.

D. Ju. Show it me. Zounds! he has got a swelling in his cheek. Quick! a lancet to open it. The poor fellow cannot stand this any longer, and this abscess may choke him. Wait! see it is quite ripe. Ha! you rascal!

Sgan. Upon my word, sir, I wished to see whether your cook had not put in too much pepper or salt.

D. Ju. Come, sit down there and eat. I have some business for you as soon as I have finished supper. I perceive you are hungry.

Sgan. (*Sitting down at the table.*) I should think so, sir, I have not eaten anything since this morning. Taste that, it is very good. (*Ragotin takes Sganarelle's plate away, as soon as he has got anything upon it to eat.*) My plate, my plate! Gently, if you please. Ods boddikins! my nannikin, how nimble you are in giving clean plates! I say, little La Violette, you are not very handy in giving a man something to drink! (*Whilst La Violette gives Sganarelle something to drink Ragotin again takes away his plate.*)

D. Ju. Who can it be that knocks in such a manner?

Sgan. Who the deuce comes to disturb us at our meal?

D. Ju. I wish to take my supper at least in peace; let no one, therefore, come in.

Sgan. Let me alone, I shall go to the door myself.

D. Ju. (*Seeing Sganarelle return frightened.*) What ails you! What is the matter?

Sgan. (*Nodding his head as the statue did.*) The . . . is there.

D. Ju. Let us go and see, and let us show that nothing can move me.

Sgan. Ah! poor Sganarelle, where will you hide yourself?

SCENE XII.—Don Juan, The Statue of the Commander, Sganarelle, La Violette, Ragotin.

D. Ju. (*To his servants.*) A chair and a plate here. Quick! (*Don Juan and the Statue sit down at the table.*) (*To Sganarelle.*) Come, sit down.

SGAN. Sir, I have lost my appetite.

D. JU. Sit down here, I say. Give me something to drink. The Commander's health, Sganarelle. Give him some wine.

SGAN. Sir, I am not thirsty.

D. JU. Drink, and sing a song to entertain the Commander.

SGAN. I have got a cold, sir.

D. JU. No matter. Begin. (*To his servants.*) You, there, come and sing along with him.

STAT. It is enough, Don Juan. I invite you to come and take supper with me to-morrow. Will you be so bold?

D. JU. Yes. Sganarelle alone shall accompany me.

SGAN. I thank you, to-morrow is fast day with me.

D. JU. (*To Sganarelle.*) Take a light.

STAT. No need of light for those whom Heaven guides.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—(*The theatre represents a landscape.*)—Don Louis, Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Louis. What! my son, is it possible that the mercy of Heaven has granted my prayers? Is what you tell me really true? Do you not deceive me with a false expectation? and can I indeed believe the astonishing tidings of your conversion?

D. Ju. (*Playing the hypocrite.*)[25] Yes, I have seen the error of my ways; I am no longer the same I was last night; and Heaven has suddenly wrought a change in me, which will surprise everyone. It has touched my heart and opened my eyes; I look back with horror upon my long blindness, and the crimes and disorders of the life I have led. In my own mind I consider all my former abominations; I am astonished that Heaven could bear with me so long, and that it has not twenty times discharged upon my head the thunderbolts of its terrible justice. I see how kind and merciful it has been to me in not punishing my crimes; I intend to profit by it as I ought, to show openly to the world a sudden change in my life, to repair, by

those means, the scandal of my past actions, and endeavor to obtain from Heaven a full remission of my sins. I am now going to strive for this; I beg of you, sir, to aid me in this design, and to assist me in making choice of a person, who may serve me as a guide, and under whose conduct I may walk safely in the way upon which I am entering.

D. Louis. Ah! my son! how easily does the love of a father return, and how quickly do the offenses of a son fade from the memory at the least mention of repentance! I have already forgotten all the sorrows you have caused me; everything is effaced by the words you have just spoken. I confess I am beside myself; I shed tears of joy; all my prayers are answered, and henceforth I have nothing to ask from Heaven. Embrace me, my son, and persist, I conjure you, in this praiseworthy resolution. As for me, I shall go immediately to carry these happy tidings to your mother, unite with her in expressing our delight, and return thanks to Heaven for the holy thoughts with which it has vouchsafed to inspire you.

SCENE II.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

Sgan. Ah, sir, how glad I am to see you converted! I have long been waiting for this; and now, thanks to Heaven, all my wishes are accomplished.

D. Ju. Hang the booby!

Sgan. How, booby?

D. Ju. What, do you think I was serious in what I said just now, and do you imagine that my mouth uttered what my heart believed?

Sgan. What! it is not . . . You do not . . . Your . . . (*Aside.*) Oh! what a man! what a man! what a man!

D. Ju. No, no, I am not altered, and my feelings are always the same.

Sgan. What, do you not yield to the surprising miracle of a moving and speaking statue?

D. Ju. There is really something in that which I do not understand; but, whatever it may be, it is not capable either of convincing my judgment, or of shaking my nerves, and if I said I wished to reform my conduct, and was going to lead an exemplary life, it is a plan which I have formed out of pure policy, a useful stratagem, a necessary disguise which I am willing to adopt, in order to spare the feelings of a father, whose assistance I want, and to screen myself, with respect to mankind, from the consequences of a hundred disagreeable adventures. Sganarelle, I make you my confidant in this case, and I am very glad to have a witness of the feeling of my inmost soul, and of the real motives which instigate me to act as I do.[26]

Sgan. What! you believe in nothing, and you pretend at the same time to set up as a virtuous man!

D. Ju. And why not? There are many others besides myself, who carry on this trade, and who make use of the same mask to deceive the world.

Sgan. (*Aside.*) Oh! what a man! what a man!

D. Ju. There is no longer any shame in acting thus: hypocrisy is a fashionable vice, and all fashionable vices pass for virtues. The character of a virtuous man is the best part which one can play. Nowadays, the profession of hypocrite possesses marvelous advantages. It is an art, the quackery of which

is always respected; and although it be seen through, no one dares to say anything against it. All other vices of mankind are liable to censure, and everyone is at liberty to attack them openly; but hypocrisy is a privileged vice, which, with its own hand, closes the mouth of all the world, and peacefully enjoys a sovereign impunity. By mere force of humbug, a compact body is formed by the whole set. He who offends one, brings them all upon him; and those, whom every one knows to act in all good faith, and to be perfectly sincere,—even those, I say, are generally the dupes of the others; they simply fall into the traps of the humbugs, and blindly support those who ape their own conduct. How many, think you, do I know who, by this stratagem, have adroitly patched up the errors of their youth; who put on a cloak of religion, and beneath this venerated habit obtain leave to be the most wicked fellows on earth? It signifies nothing that their intrigues, and they themselves, are known for what they are, they have none the less influence in society; a demurely bent head, a canting sigh, and a pair of up-turned eyes, justify with the world all that they can do. It is under this favorable shelter that I intend to take refuge, and arrange matters comfortably. I shall not abandon my darling habits, but I shall take care to conceal them, and amuse myself quietly. If I should be discovered, I shall, without stirring a finger, find my interests espoused by the whole crew,[27] and be defended by them through thick and thin against every one. In short, this is the true way of doing with impunity all that I please. I shall set myself up as a censor of the actions of others, judge ill of every one, and think well only of myself. Whoever has offended me, however slightly, I shall never forgive; but preserve, without much ado, an irreconcilable hatred. I shall announce myself as the advocate of the interests of Heaven; and, under this convenient pretext, I shall persecute my enemies, accuse them of impiety, let loose against them those rash zealots who, without knowing why or wherefore, will raise an outcry against them, overwhelm them with abuse, and openly condemn them to perdition on their own private authority. It is thus that we must profit by men's weaknesses, and that a man who is no fool adapts himself to the vices of his age.[28]

SGAN. O heavens! what do I hear? You only wanted to be a hypocrite to make you perfect; and now you have reached the height of your abominations. Sir, your last stroke is more than I can bear, and I cannot help speaking. Do what you please with me; beat me, break every bone in my body, kill me if you like; I must discharge my conscience, and, like a faithful servant, tell you what I ought. Know, sir, that the pitcher goes so often to the well, that it comes home broken at last, and as that author, whose name I have forgotten, very well says, man is, in this world, like a bird on a bough; the bough is fixed to the tree; he who clings to the tree follows good precepts; good precepts are better than fair words; fair words are found at court; at court are courtiers; the courtiers follow the fashion; fashion proceeds from fancy; fancy is a faculty of the soul; the soul gives us life; life ends in death; death causes us to think of heaven; heaven is above the earth; the earth is not the sea; the sea is subject to storms; the storms toss vessels; vessels have need of a good pilot; a good pilot is prudent; young people are not prudent; young people ought to obey old people; old people love riches; riches make

men rich; the rich are not poor; the poor have necessities; necessity has no law; he who knows no law lives like a brute beast, and consequently you shall be condemned to the bottomless pit.[29]

D. Ju. What fine arguments!

Sgan. If you do not give in, after this, so much the worse for you.

SCENE III.—Don Carlos, Don Juan, Sganarelle.

D. Car. Don Juan, I meet you just in time; and I am glad to address you here rather than at your own house, to ask you what you are resolved to do. You know that it concerns me, and that, in your presence, I took upon me to watch over this affair. As for me, I do not conceal it, I sincerely wish that things may be arranged in an amicable way; there is nothing which I would not do to induce you to take that course, and to see you publicly recognize my sister as your wife.

D. Ju. (*In a hypocritical tone.*) Alas! I should indeed like to give you, with all my heart, the satisfaction you desire; but Heaven is directly opposed to it; it has inspired me with the design of amending my life; and I now entertain no other thoughts than entirely to abandon all that binds me to this world, to strip myself as soon as possible of all sorts of pomps and vanities, and henceforth to correct, by an austere behavior, all those criminal irregularities into which a blind and youthful ardor led me.

D. Car. This design, Don Juan, does not clash with what I propose, and the company of a lawful wife is not in opposition to the praiseworthy designs with which Heaven has inspired you.

D. Ju. Alas! that is by no means the case. Your sister herself has formed this same plan; she has resolved to withdraw into a nunnery; and we have been both touched by grace at the same time.

D. Car. Her going into a nunnery cannot give us satisfaction, since it may be attributed to the contempt which you show to her and our family; our honor demands that she should be married to you.

D. Ju. I assure you that that cannot be. I was very much inclined towards that union; and this very day I asked counsel from Heaven about it; but, when I did so I heard a voice which told me that I ought not to think of your sister, and that most certainly I could not be saved with her.

D. Car. Do you think, Don Juan, that you can blind us with such fine excuses?

D. Ju. I obey the voice of Heaven.

D. Car. What? would you have me be satisfied with such a speech?

D. Ju. Heaven will have it so.

D. Car. Have you taken my sister out of a nunnery, to abandon her at last?

D. Ju. Heaven ordains it so.

D. Car. Shall we suffer such a blot upon our family?

D. Ju. Seek your redress from Heaven.

D. Car. Pooh! why always Heaven?

D. Ju. Heaven wishes it should be so.

D. Car. It is enough, Don Juan; I understand you. This spot is not favorable for what I have to say about it; but I shall find you before long.

D. Ju. You may do as you please. You know I am not wanting in courage, and can use my sword, if need be. I am going directly

through that little lonely street which leads to the great convent; but I declare to you, solemnly, I do not wish to fight; Heaven forbid the thought; and if you attack me, we shall see what will come of it.[30]

D. Car. Truly, we shall see, we shall see.

SCENE IV.—Don Juan, Sganarelle.

Sgan. Sir, what a devil of a style have you adopted? This is worse than all the rest, and I liked you much better as you were before. I always hoped you might be saved; but now I despair of it; I believe that Heaven, which has endured you hitherto, can never bear this last abomination.

D. Ju. Pooh! Pooh! Heaven is not so particular as you think; and if men were every time to . . .

SCENE V.—Don Juan, Sganarelle, A Ghost *in the form of a veiled woman.*

Sgan. (*Seeing the Ghost.*) Ah! sir, Heaven speaks to you; it is a warning it gives you.

D. Ju. If Heaven gives me a warning, it must speak more plainly, if it wishes me to understand it.

Ghost. Don Juan has but a moment to take advantage of the mercy of Heaven; and if he does not repent now, his perdition is certain.

Sgan. Do you hear, sir?

D. Ju. Who dares to utter such words? I think I know that voice.

Sgan. Oh, sir, it is a Ghost, I know it by its step.

D. Ju. Ghost, phantom, or devil, I shall see what it is. (*The Ghost changes its shape, and represents Time with a scythe in its hand.*)

Sgan. Oh, heavens! do you see this change of shape, sir?

D. Ju. No, no, nothing can frighten me; and I shall try with my sword whether it is a body or a spirit. (*The Ghost vanishes the instant Don Juan offers to strike it.*)

Sgan. Ah, sir, yield to so many proofs, and repent immediately.

D. Ju. No, no, come what will, it shall never be said that I was capable of repentance. Come, follow me.

SCENE VI.—The Statue of the Commander, Don Juan, Sganarelle.

Stat. Stay, Don Juan. You gave me your word yesterday that you would come and sup with me.

D. Ju. Yes. Where shall we go?

Stat. Give me your hand.

D. Ju. Here it is.

Stat. Don Juan, a terrible death is the consequence of persistency in sin; and when the mercy of Heaven is refused, its thunder appears.

D. Ju. Oh, heavens! what do I feel? an inward flame devours me, I can bear it no longer, and my whole body is on fire. Oh! (*Loud claps of thunder are heard; great flashes of lightning fall upon Don Juan. The earth opens and swallows him up; flames burst out of the very spot where he went down.*)

SCENE VII.—Sganarelle (*Alone*).

Alas! my wages! my wages! Every one is satisfied by his death. Offended Heaven, violated laws, maids seduced, families dishonored, parents outraged, wives ruined, husbands driven to despair, all are satisfied. I alone am unhappy. My wages, my wages, my wages![31]

NOTES

[1] A Commander was a member of the military-religious order of the Knights of Malta, or of any other similar order, who, by virtue of long or meritorious services, had the control of a manor, with lands and tenements appertaining thereto, part of the proceeds of which had to be used for the benefit of that order, and part for himself. Such a manor was called a commandery or preceptory.

[2] Molière played this part. In the inventory taken after the author's death, we see: "a deep gold-colored satin little jerkin, with long skirts, a linen jacket with gold facings, a doublet of flowered satin for the *Festin de Pierre*." I doubt if this was part of the dress of Sganarelle.

[3] Tobacco had been in use for more than a century. It was introduced into France, in the year 1560, by Jean Nicot, lord of Villemain, ambassador of Francis II. at the Court of Madrid, who made a present of it to the Queen, Catharine de Medici; hence its first name was in French *Herbe de la reine* or *Nicotine*.

[4] Molière has not given a list of the names of the different wives of Don Juan, to be found in the Italian piece which he has freely followed, and also in several other plays of that time. Perhaps he thought the idea too hackneyed. In Mozart's opera, *Don Giovanni*, the list of the *mille e tre* conquests of the hero, as sung by Leporello, beginning *Madamina il catalogo e questo, Delle belle ch' amo il padron mio*, produces a great and admirable effect.

[5] Lovelace, in Richardson's *Clarissa Harlowe*, expresses nearly the same sentiments, and writes, "the *Debellare superbos* should be my motto; I always considered opposition and resistance as a challenge to do my worst."

[6] The French word *libertin* had formerly not only the signification which it has in our days, but meant also a free-thinker; and was often said of a man or woman who did not like to submit to the ordinary rules and regulations of society. Libertine was also formerly applied, in English, "to certain heretical sects, and intended to mark the licentious liberty of their creed and forms," says Trench, in his *Select Glossary*, "a striking evidence of the extreme likelihood that he who has no restraints on his belief will ere long have none upon his life."

[7] Sganarelle describes the apparel Don Juan wears, without daring to name him.

[8] This remark of Don Juan on beholding a woman whom he has abandoned, shows that he has neither feelings nor heart. Louis XIV., then (1665) in the height of his passion for Mademoiselle de la Vallière, behaved afterwards to her as badly as Don Juan does to Donna Elvira. It has many a time been stated that the King was neither coarser nor more unfeeling than his contemporaries. We have only to look at the *Mémoires du Duc de Saint Simon*, to see what at least one of them thought of *le Grand Monarque*. But Louis XIV. was no skeptic, and during the latter part of his reign he became even a fanatic and a persecutor.

[9] Charlotte and Pierrot speak in a provincial dialect, which was quite a novelty on the stage in the time of Molière; we shall give an example of this:—CHARLOTTE: *Notre dinse! Piarrot, tu t' es trouvé là bien à point.* PIERROT: *Parquienne! il ne s'en est pas fallu l' épaisseur d'une éplinque, qu'il ne se sayant nayés tous deux.* CHARLOTTE: *C'est donc le coup de vent d' à matin qui les avait ranvarsés dans la mar?* etc. As it would be impossible to render this in an equivalent dialect, I have translated it in plain English.

[10] The original has *Je veux que monsieur vous montre votre bec jaune;* literally, "I will that the gentleman should show you your yellow beak." This is a phrase which dates from the days when falconry was a favorite sport. A bird with a yellow beak is a very young bird, hence young scholars, greenhorns, were called *béjaunes*, and thus *montrer a quelqu'un son béjaune* or *son bec jaune* came to mean, "to show one he was duped" or foolishly taken in. "Green," instead of *jaune*, yellow, appears to have the same signification in very familiar English phraseology.

[11] In the original we find, *Je veux que monsieur vous rende un peu camuse*, literally, "I wish the gentleman would make you a little flat-nosed," or figuratively, as above. *Avoir un pied de nez*, literally "to have a nose a foot long," has the same meaning when used as a familiar form of speech.

[12] On reading this scene it seems forced and unnatural, but on the stage, when acted well, it is very amusing.

[13] This remark, which Molière has made use of in *Love is the best Doctor*, is taken from Montaigne's *Essays*. "If good fortune, nature, or some other strange cause, produce something good and healthy within us, it is the privilege of medicine to see it attributed to it; all the fortunate successes which happen to a patient who is under the hands of physicians, are ascribed to it."

[14] This is the first satirical outburst of Molière against the physicians; but as it was put into the mouth of a man who believed in nothing, and attacked everything, the doctors and the public in general did not think they were the expression of the feelings of the author. His next play, *Love is the best Doctor*, undeceived them.

[15] In Molière's time, several works, pamphlets, and satires had been written against, or in favor of a comparative new remedy, a preparation of antimony, called emetic, or antimonial wine. But in 1658, Louis XIV. fell ill at Calais, and was cured by it, so that this medicine became quite the fashion. In 1666, about one year after the first performance of *Don Juan*, the parliament decided that antimony could be used by the physicians of the Faculté.

[16] The *moine bourru*, literally, "the gruff monk," was a phantom who, it is said, ran through the streets at night, and beat the belated wayfarers. This connecting a superstition with the highest belief gave great offense in Molière's time, and our author had probably to suppress this passage after the first representations of *Don Juan*. But very likely he only wished to show that people like Sganarelle have a greater belief in superstitions than in the highest abstract truths.

[17] Molière intended to print his *Don Juan*, but this was never done. In 1682, eight years after his death, La Grange and Vinot, in the first collected edition of Molière's works, printed this play; but they had to suppress several passages, which were afterwards found in a copy, that belonged to M. de la Reynie, then lieutenant-general of police, and which was discovered only in 1825. Some passages are found only in the editions printed at Amsterdam in 1683, and at Brussels in 1694. None of these has ever before been translated into English. The suppressed words being page 38, "*Don Juan*. Let us leave that alone," until nearly the end of the scene.

[18] The original has *pour l'amour de l'humanité*, for the love of humanity. *Humanité*, often meant with Molière "the quality of being human," and not what it usually means now, "mankind collectively." The passages suppressed in the first printed and uncastrated edition of this play are on page 40, from "I have not even a piece of bread to eat," to, "I would rather die of hunger." The rest of the scene is found only in the Amsterdam edition of 1684. This whole scene caused an immense scandal in the beginning, and Molière was accused of impiety (see Introductory Notice).

[19] This is the first time that Don Juan threatens Sganarelle in a positive and serious way,—a proof that he is disturbed by what he has seen. Hence the slightest contradiction kindles his fury.

[20] This is an imitation of the *Andria* of Terence, Act I., Scene 2.

[21] Sganarelle has not much more money to give than his master; but as he has not the same means of awing or of flattering M. Dimanche, he uses but few words, and trusts to the strength of his arm to silence his creditor, and to turn him out of the house. The servant, as well as the master, are true to their natures.

[22] Burns also says "The rank is but the guinea stamp,
The man's the gowd for a' that."

[23] Nearly the whole of Don Louis' speech, beginning from, "Oh! what a mean spirit you have," is, in the original, in blank verse.

[24] Don Juan twice says to Sganarelle, "I in the wrong?" The reproaches of his servant would not sting him so much if he did not feel he deserved them.

[25] Don Juan until now was swayed only by his passions, and a slave to pleasure and debauchery. When he finds himself everywhere detested, when he sees the anger of powerful families raised against him, when his friends leave him isolated, and his creditors become importunate, when even his own father has cursed and disinherited him, and when he imagines that the shadow of a man he has killed pursues him, the only way that is left open to him, is falsehood and hypocrisy. He does not change his character, it is true, but his conversation and behavior.

[26] The maxims which Don Juan promulgates farther on in defense of hypocrisy, are not so much for Sganarelle as for the audience who listen to the piece; hence the statement that he is "very glad to have a witness . . . of the (his) real motives," which he then unfolds. Don Juan is above all afraid that, for one single moment, he could be thought sincerely repentant, and is glad to have some confidant who can testify to his hypocrisy. I doubt, however, if the real hypocrite ever unbosoms himself, even to his most intimate companion. Tartuffe has no confidant.

[27] The original has a "*cabale*," which was formerly said only of the clique of *The Précieuses;* but, when Don Juan was performed (1665), it had come to mean "a set of organized devotees."

[28] These words contain a vigorous protest against those who had attacked *Tartuffe*,—which had already been played tentatively—and through whose machinations it had been forbidden to be brought out.

[29] Some of the early editions have Sganarelle's speech only as far as "in death." At last, Sganarelle's indignation is roused by Don Juan's hypocrisy; he flies in a passion, and attacks his master violently, but flounders in the midst of his reasonings, talks nonsense, and ends rather abruptly.

[30] In the former scene, Don Juan has laid down the theory of hypocrisy; in this scene, he brings it into practice.

[31] This exclamation of Sganarelle about his wages gave great offense. People considered that a man who could remain cool and collected in the presence of such a miracle, was nothing better than an infidel, and that instead of shouting for his wages, he would have done better to remain dumb, as struck by a religious terror. Molière had to leave out the exclamation, "my wages." But, a few years later, it was allowed to pass without any remarks when put into the mouth of Arlequin in a stupid farce by a certain actor, Rosimond.

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LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR

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JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

A LITTLE WINGED CUPID, WITH THE GOWN, RUFF AND HAT OF A DOCTOR, IS SEATED UNDER AN ARCH AND IN FRONT OF A LARGE SCALLOP SHELL. IN THE CENTRE IS THE TITLE OF THE PLAY: BELOW ARE A COUPLE OF ARROWS IN THE FORM OF SAINT ANDREW'S CROSS, FROM WHICH HANGS A PENDANT OF VERY LONG PEARLS.

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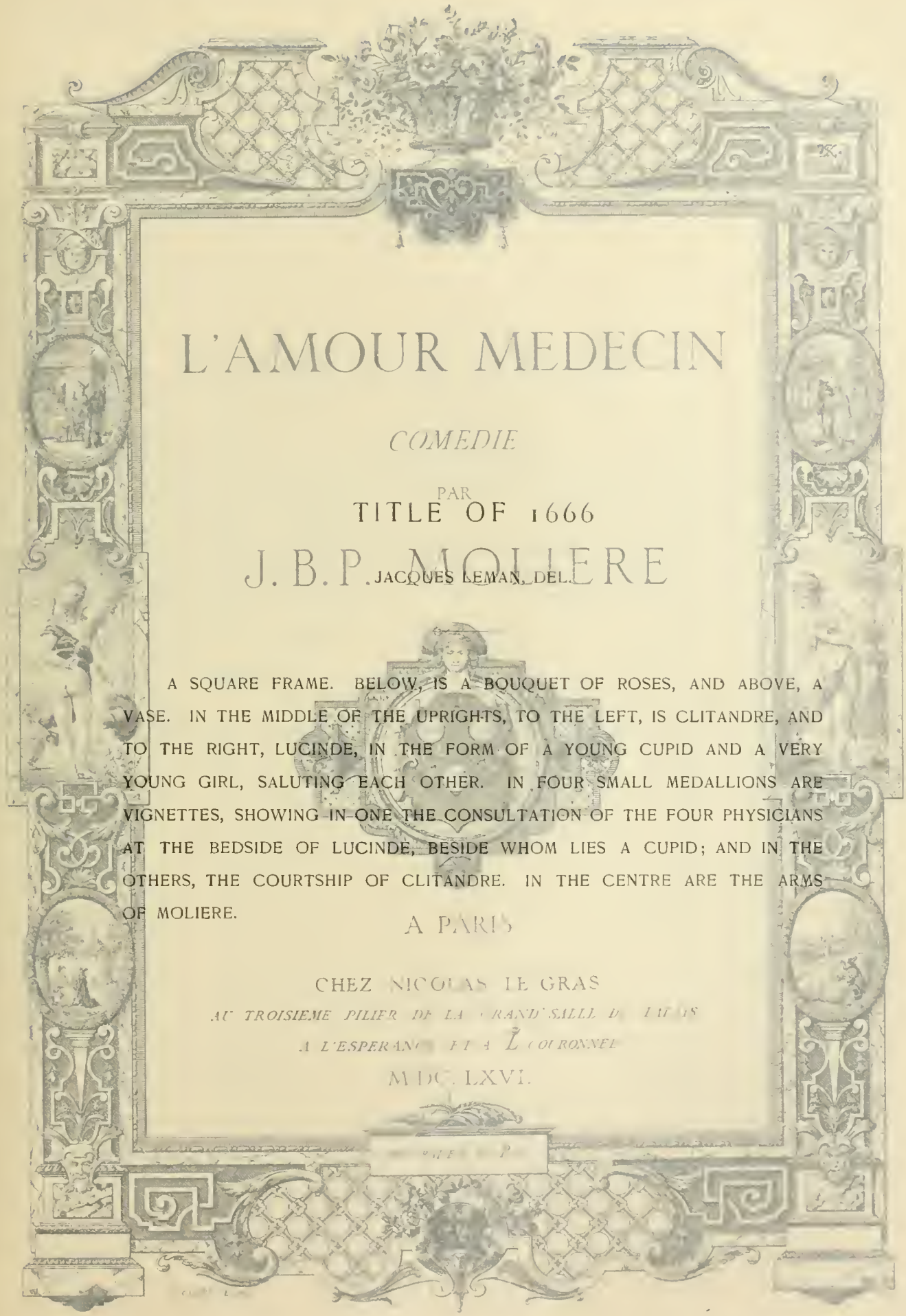
A LITTLE WINGED CUPID, WITH THE GOWN, RUFF AND HAT OF A DOCTOR, IS SEATED UNDER AN ARCH AND IN FRONT OF A LARGE SCALLOP SHELL. IN THE CENTRE IS THE TITLE OF THE PLAY: BELOW ARE A COUPLE OF ARROWS IN THE FORM OF SAINT ANDREW'S CROSS, FROM WHICH HANGS A PENDANT OF VERY LONG PEARLS.

LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR


L'AMOUR MEDECIN
COMEDIE
PAR
TITLE OF 1666
J. B. P. MOLIERE
JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.
A SQUARE FRAME. BELOW, IS A BOUQUET OF ROSES, AND ABOVE, A VASE. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE UPRIGHTS, TO THE LEFT, IS CLITANDRE, AND TO THE RIGHT, LUCINDE, IN THE FORM OF A YOUNG CUPID AND A VERY YOUNG GIRL, SALUTING EACH OTHER. IN FOUR SMALL MEDALLIONS ARE VIGNETTES, SHOWING IN ONE THE CONSULTATION OF THE FOUR PHYSICIANS AT THE BEDSIDE OF LUCINDE, BESIDE WHOM LIES A CUPID; AND IN THE OTHERS, THE COURTSHIP OF CLITANDRE. IN THE CENTRE ARE THE ARMS OF MOLIERE.
A PARIS
CHEZ NICOLAS LE GRAS
AU TROISIEME PILIER DE LA GRAND' SALLE DU PALAIS
A L'ESPERANCE ET A LA COURONNE
M DC LXVI.

TITLE OF 1666

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

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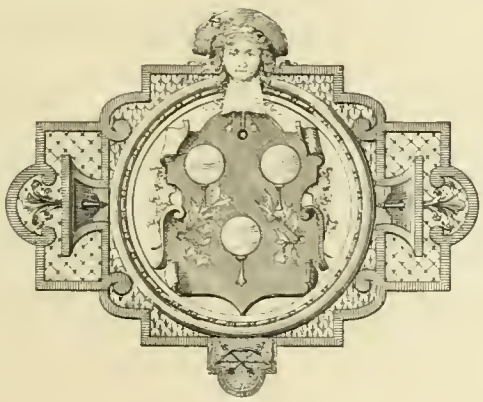
L'AMOUR MEDECIN

COMEDIE

PAR

J.B.P. MOLIERE



A PARIS

CHEZ NICOLAS LE GRAS

AU TROISIEME PILIER DE LA GRAND' SALLE DU PALAIS

A L'ESPERANCE ET A L. COURONNEE

M.DC. LXVI.

AVEC PRIVILEGE DU ROY.

JACQUES LEMAN

Par Grâce et Privilège du Roy, donné à Paris le 30 de Décembre 1665, signé De SEIGNEROLLE et scellé du grand Sceau de cire jaune, il est permis à Jean-Baptiste Pocquelin de Molière, Comédien de la Troupe de nostre très cher et très amé Frère unique, le Duc d'Orléans, de faire imprimer, vendre et débiter, pendant le temps et espace de cinq ans, par tel Libraire ou Imprimeur qne bon luy semblera, une pièce de Théâtre qu'il a composée, intitulée *L'Amour Médecin*, avec Deffenses à toutes personnes de réimprimer ou contrefaire, vendre ou distribuer ladite Pièce, ou partie d'icelle, sans sa permission, à peine de confiscation des exemplaires et de l'amende portée dans l'original.

Registré sur le Livre de la Communauté des Imprimeurs, Marchands Libraires de Paris, le 4 Janvier 1666.

Signé : PIGET, Syndic.

Ledit Sieur Molière a cédé, quitté et transporté son droit de Privilège à Pierre Trabouillet, Nicolas Le Gras et Théodore Girard, Marchands Libraires à Paris, pour en jouir ainsi qu'il est porté par les dites Lettres de Privilège, suivant l'accord fait entre eux.

Achevé d'imprimer pour la première fois le 15 Janvier 1666.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

On the 15th of September, 1665, was represented at Versailles an impromptu comedy, "interspersed with tunes, symphonies, singing and dancing," called *Love is the best Doctor*, in which Molière most strenuously attacked the faculty of medicine. He had already begun this criticism in *Don Juan;* but, as it was put into the mouth of a complete skeptic in everything, it was not considered as very serious. In *Love is the best Doctor*, however, he ridiculed the most fashionable physicians, and the patients who consulted and trusted them. Four doctors are called in to a consultation, in which, instead of comparing notes about the state of the patient, they converse about things in general and nothing in particular; at the end, the distracted father finds himself more bewildered than before, and rushes out of the house to buy a quack medicine, which the quack declares "cures by its excellence rare more complaints than are counted up in a whole year," and the great virtues of which could ne'er be "repaid by the gold of all climes which by the ocean are bound," but for which the anxious but avaricious parent only pays "thirty sous," "which," he says, addressing the quack, "you will take, if you please." The professional discussions of the learned brethren, and the shrewd interested advice of Dr. Filerin, who rebukes them, and tells them not to quarrel before the public, and thus to lessen their influence, but to maintain a sedate and deeply anxious look, are admirable, and suitable, not for one but for all ages. As long as credulous and physic-swallowing people exist, and as long as external appearances will be taken as an indication of true knowledge and worth, so long will Molière's comedy retain its sting. In nice contrast to the contentious practitioners, is the sharp common-sense of the maid Lisette, and the stubbornness and miserly feelings of the father Sganarelle, who asks advice, but does not follow it, refuses to give his daughter in marriage because "he means to keep his wealth," and is finally tricked out of his daughter and a dowry as well.

Although I do not deny the courage, I cannot admire the taste, of Molière, in bringing four famous court physicians bodily on the stage, in exposing the physical defects of two of them,—the one a stammerer, the other a very rapid talker,—and in even barely disguising their names under Greek denominations, and which, tradition affirms, are due to Boileau. It is always right to attack and ridicule a vice on the stage, when by so doing, an author conscientiously believes that he is improving his fellow-men at the same time that he is amusing them,

and is holding "a mirror up to nature;" but it can never be defensible to imitate living persons, to mimic their defects, to ape their attitudes—nay, to wear their very dress. The representative of a vice or virtue should, I imagine, be an embodiment of many persons, possessed of such good or evil qualities, but not the faithful portrait of one man or woman. To say that such an imitation is Aristophanesk, is simply to disguise a very ugly, and not even a very artistical, thing, under a not over-nicely sounding adjective.

According to some annotators, Molière meant by Desfonandrès, compounded of two Greek words, *phonos*, murder, and *andrès*, men, a certain Dr. Elie Béda, who, at the time when *Love is the best Doctor* was first represented, must have been about seventy years old. He had adopted the name of Des Fougerais, and was the favorite physician of the high nobility and magistracy. Born a Protestant, he became a Roman Catholic in 1648, is said to have been a regular medical Vicar of Bray, and never to have changed his religious or medical opinions, except to benefit himself and his family. M. A. Jal, in his *Dictionnaire Critique*, pretends that Guénault is caricatured in Desfonandrès, because he killed so many patients by antimony, and because Desfonandrès boasts, in the third scene of the second act, that he has "an astonishing horse, an indefatigable animal." Now, it was well known in Molière's time, that Guénault was the only doctor who always rode on horseback, whilst his colleagues went about in carriages, sedan chairs, or on foot.

Bahis (barker), seems to have been intended for Dr. Esprit, whose real name was André, and who spoke very fast. He had been one of the physicians of Cardinal Richelieu, afterwards of Cardinal Mazarin, and finally of Monsieur, brother of the King, and was a declared partisan of emetics. According to Raynaud, *les Médecines au temps de Molière*, 1683, the physician Brayer is meant by Bahis, chiefly because Bahis is in French "brailleur, shouter," and therefore there is a similarity in name, and also because he was one of the four physicians who held a famous consultation at Vincennes, when Cardinal Mazarin was dying.

By Macroton (stammerer), it is generally believed that Dr. François Guénault is meant, because he spoke very slowly. This gentleman was one of the best known and most celebrated medical men of the time, and had been physician to the Prince de Condé, and then to the queen. He had often professionally attended on the king, and scarcely a man of rank fell ill who did not consult him. It is said that he was very fond of money, and a declared champion of antimony, and, through his influence amongst the great, a decided lord amongst doctors.

Tomès (the bleeder), was intended for Vallot, first physician to the king with the rank of grand chamberlain, as well as with the hereditary title of count; and who exercised supreme jurisdiction over all the doctors and apothecaries in the kingdom. He kept a *Journal de la Santé du Roy* (Louis XIV.) published in 1662, which contains all the recipes "with which Heaven inspired" him, to keep the monarch in health. Bleeding and purgatives appear to have been the doctor's two favorite remedies. He was a strenuous defender of emetics, Peruvian bark and laudanum, and obtained a great triumph when he cured, in 1650, Louis XIV., with antimonial wine; but became anew the butt of many satires and epigrams, on the death of Henrietta of France, Queen of England, whom his opponents accused him of having killed by his prescriptions.

In the character of Dr. Filerin (a friend of death), it is said that Molière wished to have a hit at the whole medical faculty. Mons. E. Soulié, in the *Recherches sur Molière*, states, that in Molière's time there lived a certain well-known fencing-master, André Fillerin, and that, therefore, the joke must have been enjoyed by the audience, on hearing that name given to a physician who killed his man.

Love is the best Doctor was, according to the preface, "sketched, written off, learned, and acted in five days." It was three times represented at Versailles, and played, for the first time, in Paris, on the 22d of September, 1665, when it was acted twenty-six times consecutively.

Several English dramatists have borrowed or imitated Molière's comedy.

The first imitator of Molière's *Love is the best Doctor* is John Lacy, who was greatly admired by Pepys[1] and by Charles II., and was an excellent low-comedy actor. During the civil wars, he served as lieutenant in the King's army, and returned to the stage at the Restoration. It has been rumored that Lacy was a great favorite of Nell Gwyn, and taught her, amongst other things, the art of acting. He lived to an advanced age, and died on the 17th of September, 1681. He wrote several plays, one of which was *The Dumb Lady; or, the Farrier made a Physician*, a farce in five acts, performed about 1672, of which the main plot is taken from Molière's *Mock Doctor*, and the catastrophe is borrowed from his *Love is the best Doctor*. Lacy, who himself most probably played the part of Drench, the farmer, dedicates his play to the high-born and most hopeful Prince Charles, Lord Limerick, and Earl of Southampton, the eldest of the three natural sons of Charles II., by Barbara Villiers, wife of Roger Palmer, Earl of Castlemain, better known as Duchess of Cleveland.[2] This dedication is couched in such high-flown and fawning language, that I give it here as a specimen of what flattery was in the days of Charles II.:

GREAT SIR,—When I began to write this dedication my hand shook, a fear possessed me, and I trembled; my pen fell from me, and my whole frame grew disordered, as if blasted with some sudden upstart comet. Such awe and reverence waits on dignity, that I now find it fit for me to wish I had been refused the honor of my dedication, rather than undertake a task so much too great for me. How shall I excuse this bold and saucy fault? How shall my mean, unworthy pen render you your attributes? Now I find presumption is a sin indeed. I have given myself a wound beyond the cure of common men; heal me, then, great sir; for where princes touch the cure is infallible. And now, since you so graciously have received my Farrier, who dares say he is no Physician? When you vouchsafe to call him Doctor, he has commenced, and from your mouth he has taken his degree; for what you say is, and ought to be. Such a power is due to you from the greatness of your blood. I and my abject muse had perished but for you; and in such distress whither should we flee for shelter but to him that has power to spread his wings and cover us? And you have done it generously. Yet am I not to wonder at this virtue in you, since your high birth can do no less for you than to make you good; and you are so. And may that goodness and humility which so early appears in you increase to a full perfection! May your virtues prove as beautiful as your person! May they still endeavor to out-vie each other, yet neither obtain, but still walk hand in hand till your virtues in you be reverenced by all mankind, and your lovely person honored by all women; and so may you continue to a long and happy life. But I need not wish this, nor the world doubt it, for already you're possessed of all those virtues that men hereafter may reasonably expect from you; for, being supported by majesty of one side, and so admired and beautiful a mother on the other, besides her great and honorable birth, on such sure foundations you cannot fail our hopes; and that you never may, shall be forever the prayers of your most faithful and most obedient servant, JOHN LACY.

Mrs. Aphra Behn (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I.) has, in *Sir Patient Fancy*—an imitation, partly of Molière's *Malade Imaginaire*, and of *M. de Pourceaugnac*, and acted at the Duke's Theatre, 1678—borrowed and amplified all the scenes of *Love is the best Doctor*, in which the physicians consult. But the patient to be cured is a hypochondriac, and not a young girl; Sir Patience himself is present at the consultation, and the doctors' names are also altered to Turboon, Amsterdam, Leyden, Brunswick, and Sir Credulous.

As a second imitation of *Love is the best Doctor* I have to mention "*The Quacks; or, Love's the Physician*, as it was acted (after being twice forbid) at the Theatre-Royal in Drury Lane (March 18, 1705), by Mr. Swiney. Quod libet, licet. London, Printed for Benj. Bragg, at the Blew Ball in Avemary Lane, 1705." In the preface, Swiney states that "this Play was to be stifled because the other House were to Act one upon the same Subject," and that "the hints of this play were taken from a petit piece of Molière call'd L'Amour Médecin," but "I can't stile it a translation, the Doctor's part being entirely new, much of the other characters alter'd, and the Contrivance somewhat Chang'd." He ends by saying that "the Noise of these Scenes Alarm'd the Licenser, who generally destroys with as much Distinction as the old Woman in Don Quixot's Library." Swiney harps on the same string in the Prologue, by saying:

> "Let every Quack be comforted to-Night,
> Care has been taken that he shall not Bite."

The play is, for the most part, a bad translation of Molière's play, with a few alterations and additions which do not improve it. The scene of Sganarelle and his advisers is left out; while a nurse and two servant-men, Harry and Edward, are needlessly introduced. The doctors' names are changed into Medley, Caudle, Tickle, Pulse, Novice, Refugee, and the conversation is slightly altered. In the end, Clitandre and Lucinda, who have been really married by a priest disguised as a footman, acknowledge their deceit, and are forgiven.

James Miller (see Introductory Notice to *The Pretentious Young Ladies*, Vol. I.) wrote a comedy, *Art and Nature*, acted at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, 1738; and according to Baker's *Biographia Dramatica*, the principal scenes in this play are founded on the *Arlequin Sauvage* of M. De l'Isle and *Le Flatteur* of Rousseau. But it met with no success, because the Templars had taken an unreasonable prejudice against Miller, on account of his farce of *The Coffee House*, in which they thought themselves attacked, and seem to have been determined to condemn any piece known to be his. Miller has imitated the first, second, fifth, and sixth scenes of the first act of *Love is the best Doctor*. In his Preface to the Right Honorable the Lady . . . Miller states, "that he never knew a Play destroy'd with so much Art . . . But in Paris there is an Academy founded for the Encouragement of Wit and Learning, so in London, it is said, there is a Society established for the Demolition of them." He also says in the Prologue, that he hopes there is none in the theatre, "who'd aim, Thro Wantonness of Heart, to blast his Fame."

Another translation of Molière's play, under the title of *Love is the Doctor*, was performed as a comedy in one act, at Lincoln's Inn Fields, on April 4, 1734, for the benefit of the author, but has never been printed.

Bickerstaffe (see Introductory Notice to *The School for Wives*, Vol. I.), in *Dr. Last in his Chariot*—an imitation of Molière's *Malade Imaginaire*, acted at the Haymarket, 1769—acknowledges his obligation to Mr. Foote for a whole scene in the first act, the consultation of the physicians. This acknowledgment is certainly a proof of Bickerstaffe's gratitude, but none of his reading; otherwise he might have discovered that Foote had simply taken it from Molière's *Love is the best Doctor*, and considerably enlarged it; the doctors are called Coffin, Skeleton, Bulruddery, and of course Doctor Last.

NOTES

[1] See Pepys' Diary 21st and 22d of May, 1662; 10th and 12th of June, 1663; 15th of April, 1st of May and 13th of August, 1667; and 28th of April, 1668.

[2] This dignity was conferred upon her, according to *Collins' Peerage*, on account of the high opinion Charles II. entertained of her "personal virtues." For a similar high opinion entertained by Louis XIV., the latter made a duchess of Mademoiselle de la Vallière.—See Introductory Notice to *The Princess of Elis*.

TO THE READER

This is only a slight impromptu, a simple pencil sketch, which it has pleased the king to have made into an entertainment. It is the most hastily composed of all those written by order of his majesty; and when I say that it was sketched, written, learned, and acted in five days, I shall only be speaking the truth. There is no need to tell you that many things depend entirely on the manner of the performance. Every one knows well enough that comedies are written only to be acted; and I advise no one to read this, unless he have the faculty, while doing so, of catching the meaning of the business of the stage. I shall say only one thing more, that it is to be wished that these sorts of works could always be shown with the same accessories, with which they are accompanied when played before the king. One would then see them under much more agreeable conditions; and the airs and symphonies of the incomparable M. Lulli, added to the sweet voices and agility of the dancers, invest them, undoubtedly, with certain graces, with which they could with difficulty dispense.

PROLOGUE

COMEDY, MUSIC, THE BALLET

COMEDY.

Let us our fruitless quarrels banish,
Each other's talents not by turns dispute:
But greater glory to attain
This day of all let be our aim.
Let us all three unite with matchless zeal
The greatest king on earth with pleasure to provide.

THE THREE TOGETHER.

Let us all three unite with matchless zeal
The greatest king on earth with pleasure to provide.

COMEDY.

From toils more irksome than can be imagined,
Amongst us, now and then, he comes to unbend,
Can greater glory, greater pleasure be our share?

THE THREE TOGETHER.

Let us all three unite with matchless zeal
The greatest king on earth with pleasure to provide.[1]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

IN THE PROLOGUE.

COMEDY MUSIC THE BALLET, Dancing.

IN THE COMEDY.

SGANARELLE, Father to Lucinde.[2]
CLITANDRE, In love with Lucinde.
M. GUILLAUME, Dealer in hangings.
M. JOSSE, Goldsmith.
M. TOMES,
M. DESFONANDRES,
M. MACROTON,
M. BAHIS,
M. FILERIN,
} Physicians.
A NOTARY.
CHAMPAGNE, Sganarelle's servant.
LUCINDE, Daughter of Sganarelle.
AMINTA, Sganarelle's neighbor.
LUCRETIA, Sganarelle's niece.
LISETTE, Maid to Lucinde.

IN THE BALLET.

First Entry.

CHAMPAGNE, Sganarelle's servant, dancing.
FOUR PHYSICIANS, Dancing.

Second Entry.

A QUACK, Singing.
TRIVELINS AND SCARAMOUCHES,[3] Dancing in the suite of the Quack.

Third Entry.

COMEDY MUSIC THE BALLET
SPORTS, LAUGHTER AND PLEASURES, Dancing.

SCENE—*Paris, in one of the rooms of Sganarelle's house.*

ACT I.

SC... M. GUILLAUME, M. JOSSE.

SGAN. What a strange thing is li[illegible] well may I say with a great ancient [illegible] pher, that he who has much land [illegible] strife,' and misfortune seldom comes [illegible] had but one wife, and she is dead.

M. GU. And, pray, how many [illegible] have?

SGAN. She is dead, friend [illegible] take this loss very much to hear[illegible] not think of it without te[illegible] altogether satisfied with her [illegible] often quarreled; but, after [illegible]

[illegible] very li[illegible] [illegible] sent me, [illegible] [illegible] it is [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ce; [illegible] M [illegible] you [illegible] co[illegible] [illegible] pray what I [illegible]

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

IN THE PROLOGUE.

COMEDY MUSIC THE BALLET, Dancing.

IN THE COMEDY.

SGANARELLE, Father to Lucinde.[2]
CLITANDRE, In love with Lucinde
M. GUILLAUME, Dealer in hangings.
M. JOSSE, Goldsmith.
M. TOMES,
M. DESFONANDRES,
M. MACROTON,
M. BAHIS,
M. FILERIN,
} Physicians.
A NOTARY.
CHAMPAGNE, Sganarelle's servant.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

AMINTA, S[illegible]arelle.
LUCRETIA, S[illegible]e's niece
LISETTE,

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

IN THE BALLET.

TO THE RIGHT AND LEFT, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE UPRIGHTS, ARE MUSICIANS; THE ONE ON THE RIGHT PLAYS A GUITAR, THE OTHER A VIOLIN.

[illegible] AND [illegible], [illegible] the suite of the Quack

Etc.

COMEDY MUSIC THE BALLET

SPORTS, LAUGHTER AND PLEASURES, Dancing.

SCENE—*Paris, in one of the rooms of Sganarelle's house.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—SGANARELLE, AMINTA, LUCRETIA, M. GUILLAUME, M. JOSSE.

SGAN. What a strange thing is life! and well may I say with a great ancient philosopher, that he who has much land has also strife,[4] and misfortune seldom comes alone. I had but one wife, and she is dead.

M. GU. And, pray, how many would you have?

SGAN. She is dead, friend Guillaume. I take this loss very much to heart, and I cannot think of it without tears. I was not altogether satisfied with her behavior, and we often quarreled; but, after all, death settles everything. She is dead; I bewail her. If she were alive, we would very likely quarrel. Of all the children God sent me, He has left me but one daughter, and it is she who is the cause of all my trouble; for I see her plunged in the most dismal melancholy, the greatest sadness, of which there is no way of getting rid, and the cause of which I cannot even learn. I declare I am at my wit's end, and am very much in want of good advice about it. (*To Lucretia.*) You are my niece; (*To Aminta*), you my neighbor; (*To M. Guillaume and M. Josse*), you my companions and friends: tell me, I pray, what I am to do.

M. Jo. As for me, I think that finery and dress are the things which please young girls most; and if I were you, I should buy her, this very day, a handsome set of diamonds, or rubies, or emeralds.

M. Gu. And I, if I were in your place, I would buy her a beautiful set of hangings, with a landscape, or some figures in them, and I should have them hung up in her room to cheer her spirits and to please her eyes.

Amin. As for me, I would not take so much trouble; I would marry her well, and as quickly as I could, to that young man who asked her hand some time ago, as I have been told.

Luc. And I, I think your daughter is not at all fit to be married. She has too delicate and unhealthy a constitution, and it is almost sending her willfully and speedily to the next world, to expose her to bear children in the state she is in. The busy world does not suit her at all, and I would advise you to put her in a convent, where she will find some amusements more to her taste.

Sgan. All this advice is certainly admirable, but I think it rather interested, and I find that you are giving it very much for your own benefit. You are a goldsmith, M. Josse; and your advice savors of a man who wants to get rid of his wares. You sell hangings, M. Guillaume, and you look to me as if you had some which you would fain part with. The young man whom you are in love with, fair neighbor, is, I have been told, the very one who is somewhat favorably disposed towards my daughter; and you would not be sorry to see her the wife of another. And as for you, my dear niece, it is not my intention, as is well known, to allow my daughter to get married at all, for reasons best known to myself; but your advice to make a nun of her is that of a woman who might charitably wish to become my sole heiress. Therefore, ladies and gentlemen, although your counsels be the best in the world, with your permission, I shall not follow a single one of them. (*Alone.*) So much for those fashionable advisers.

SCENE II.—Lucinde, Sganarelle.

Sgan. Ah, here is my daughter come to take a breath of air. She does not see me. She is sighing; she looks up to the sky. (*To Lucinde.*) May Heaven protect you! Good morning, my darling. Well, what is the matter? How do you feel? What! always so sad and so melancholy, and you will not tell me what ails you? Come, open your little heart to me. There, my poor pet, come and tell your little thoughts to your little fond papa. Keep your spirits up. Let me give you a kiss. Come. (*Aside.*) It makes me wild to see her in that humor. (*To Lucinde.*) But tell me, do you wish to kill me with displeasure; and am I not to know the reason of this great listlessness? Tell me the cause, and I promise that I shall do everything for you. Yes, if you will only tell me why you are so sad, I assure you and swear on this very spot, that I shall leave nothing

undone to please you; I cannot say more. Are you jealous because one of your companions is better dressed than yourself, and is it some new-fashioned stuff of which you want a dress? No. Is your room not furnished nicely enough, and do you wish for one of those cabinets from St. Laurent's Fair?[5] It is not that. Do you feel inclined to take lessons in something, and shall I get you a master to teach you how to play upon the harpsichord? No, not that either. Are you in love with some one, and do you wish to be married? (*Lucinde gives an affirmative sign.*)

SCENE III.—SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, LISETTE.

LIS. Well, sir, you have just been talking to your daughter. Have you found out the cause of her melancholy?

SGAN. No. She is a hussy who enrages me.

LIS. Let me manage it, sir; I shall pump her a little.

SGAN. There is no occasion; and since she prefers to be in this mood, I am inclined to let her remain in it.

LIS. Let me manage it, I tell you. Perhaps she will open her heart more freely to me than to you. How now! madam,[6] you will not tell us what ails you, and you wish to grieve everyone around you? You ought not to behave as you do, and if you have any objection to explain yourself to a father, you ought to have none to open your heart to me. Tell me, do you wish anything from him? He has told us more than once that he will spare nothing to satisfy you. Does he not allow you all the freedom you could wish for? And do pleasure parties and feasts not tempt you? Say! has anyone displeased you? Say! have you not some secret liking for some one to whom you would wish your father to marry you? Ah! I begin to understand you; that is it? Why the deuce so many compliments? Sir, the secret is found out, and . . .

SGAN. (*Interrupting her.*) Go, ungrateful girl; I do not wish to speak to you any more, and I leave you in your obstinacy.

LUC. Dear father, since you wish me to tell you . . .

SGAN. Yes, I am losing all my regard for you.

LIS. Her sadness, sir . . .

SGAN. She is a hussy who wishes to drive me to my grave.

LUC. But, father, I am willing . . .

SGAN. That is not a fit reward for having brought you up as I have done.

LIS. But, sir . . .

SGAN. No, I am in a terrible rage with her.

LUC. But, father . . .

SGAN. I do not love you any longer.

LIS. But . . .

SGAN. She is a slut.

LUC. But . . .

SGAN. An ungrateful girl.

LIS. But . . .

SGAN. A hussy who will not tell me what is the matter with her.

LIS. It is a husband she wants.

SGAN. (*Pretending not to hear.*) I have done with her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. I hate her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. And disown her as my daughter.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. Do not speak to me any more about her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. Speak no more to me about her.

LIS. A husband.

SGAN. Speak no more to me about her.

LIS. A husband, a husband, a husband.

SCENE IV.—LUCINDE, LISETTE.

LIS. True enough, none so deaf as those who will not hear.

LUC. Well, Lisette, I was wrong to hide my grief! I had but to speak to get all I wished from my father! You see now.

LIS. Upon my word, he is a disagreeable man; and I confess that it would give me the greatest pleasure to play him some trick. But how is it, madam, that, till now, you have kept your grief from me?

LUC. Alas! what would have been the use of telling you before? and would it not have been quite as well if I had kept it to myself all my life? Do you think that I have not foreseen all which you see now, that I did not thoroughly know the sentiments of my father, and that when he refused my hand to my lover's friend, who came to ask for it in his name, he had not crushed every hope in my heart?

LIS. What! this stranger, who asked for your hand, is the one whom you . . .

LUC. Perhaps it is not altogether modest in a girl to explain herself so freely; but, in short, I tell you candidly, that, were I allowed to wish for any one, it is he whom I should choose. We have never had any conversation together, and his lips have never avowed the love he has for me; but, in every spot where he had a chance of seeing me, his looks and his actions have always spoken so tenderly, and his asking me in marriage seems to me so very honorable, that my heart has not been able to remain insensible to his passion; and yet, you see to what the harshness of my father is likely to bring all this tenderness.

LIS. Let me manage it. Whatever reason I have to blame you for the secret you kept from me, I shall not fail to serve your love; and, provided you have sufficient resolution . . .

LUC. But what am I to do against a father's authority? And if he will not relent . . .

LIS. Come, come, you must not allow yourself to be led like a goose, and provided it be done honorably, we can free ourselves from a father's tyranny. What does he wish you to do? Are you not of an age to be married, and does he think you are made of marble? Once more bear up, I shall take in hand your love affair, and from this very moment do all I can to favor it, and you shall see that I know some stratagems . . . But

I see your father. Let us go in, and leave me to act.

SCENE V.—SGANARELLE (*Alone*).

It is good sometimes to pretend not to hear things, which one hears only too well; and I have done wisely to ward off the declaration of a wish which I have no intention of satisfying. Was there ever a greater piece of tyranny than this custom to which they wish to subject all fathers; anything more preposterous and ridiculous than to amass great wealth by hard work, and to bring up a girl with the utmost tenderness and care, in order to strip one's self of the one and of the other, for the benefit of a man who is nothing to us? No, no, I laugh at that custom, and I mean to keep my wealth and my daughter to myself.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*Running on to the stage and pretending not to see Sganarelle.*) Oh! what a misfortune! Oh! what a calamity! Poor Mr. Sganarelle! where can I find him?

SGAN. (*Aside.*) What does she say?

LIS. (*Still running about.*) Oh! wretched father! what will you do when you hear this news?

SGAN. (*Aside.*) What can it be?

LIS. My poor mistress!

SGAN. I am undone!

LIS. Ah!

SGAN. (*Running after Lisette.*) Lisette!

LIS. What a misfortune!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. What an accident!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. What a calamity!

SGAN. Lisette!

LIS. Oh, sir!

SGAN. What is the matter?

LIS. Sir!

SGAN. What has happened?

LIS. Your daughter . . .[7]

SGAN. Oh! Oh!

LIS. Do not cry in such a way, sir. You will make me laugh.

SGAN. Tell me quickly.

LIS. Your daughter, overcome by your words, and seeing how dreadfully angry you were with her, went quietly up to her room, and, driven by despair, opened the window that looks out upon the river.

SGAN. Well!

LIS. Then, casting her looks up to heaven: "No," said she, "it is impossible for me to live under my father's anger, and as he disowns me for his child, I shall die."

SGAN. She has thrown herself out of the window?

LIS. No, sir. She gently closed it, and lay down upon her bed. There she began to cry bitterly; all at once she turned pale, her eyes rolled about, her strength failed her, and she became stiff in my arms.

SGAN. Oh, my child! She is dead?

LIS. No, sir. I pinched her till she came to herself again; but she relapses every moment, and I believe she will not live out the day.

SGAN. Champagne! Champagne! Champagne!

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE, CHAMPAGNE, LISETTE.

SGAN. Quick, go and fetch me some doctors, and bring a lot of them.[8] One cannot have too many in a crisis like this. Oh, my daughter! my poor child!

First Entry.[9]

Champagne, servant to Sganarelle, knocks, dancing, at the doors of four physicians.

The four physicians dance, and ceremoniously enter into Sganarelle's house.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Sganarelle, Lisette.

Lis. What do you want with four physicians, sir? Is one not enough to kill one person?

Sgan. Hold your tongue. Four heads are better than one.

Lis. Cannot your daughter die well enough without the assistance of those gentlemen?

Sgan. Do you think people die through having physicians?

Lis. Undoubtedly; and I knew a man who maintained—and proved it, too, by excellent reasons—that we should never say, "Such a one has died of a fever, or from inflammation of the lungs," but, "Such a one has died of four physicians and two apothecaries."

Sgan. Hush! do not offend those gentlemen.

Lis. Upon my word, sir, our cat had a narrow escape from a leap he took, a little while ago, from the top of the house into the street; he was three days without eating, and unable to wag head or foot; but it is very lucky that there are no cat doctors, else it would have been all over with him, for they would have physicked and bled him.

SGAN. Will you hold your tongue when I bid you? What next! Here they are.

LIS. Look out; you are going to be finely edified. They will tell you in Latin that your daughter is ill.

SCENE II.—MM. TOMES, DESFONANDRES, MACROTON, BAHIS, SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

SGAN. Well, gentlemen?

M. TO. We have examined the patient sufficiently, and undoubtedly there is a great deal of impurity in her.

SGAN. Is my daughter impure?

M. TO. I mean to say that there is a great deal of impurity in her system, and much corrupt matter.

SGAN. Ah! I understand you now.

M. TO. But . . . We are going to consult together.

SGAN. Come, hand some chairs.

LIS. (*To M. Tomes.*) Ah! sir, are you with them?

SGAN. (*To Lisette.*) How do you know this gentleman?

LIS. From having seen him the other day at a dear friend's of your niece.

M. TO. How is her coachman?

LIS. Very well indeed. He is dead.

M. TO. Dead?

LIS. Yes.

M. TO. That cannot be.

LIS. I do not know whether it can be or not; but I know well enough that it is.

M. TO. He cannot be dead, I tell you.

LIS. And I tell you that he is dead and buried.

M. TO. You are mistaken.

LIS. I have seen him.

M. TO. It is impossible. Hippocrates says that these sorts of diseases end only on the fourteenth or twenty-first day; and he has been ill only six.

LIS. Hippocrates may say what he likes; but the coachman is dead.

SGAN. Peace! chatterbox. Come, let us leave this room. Gentlemen, I pray you to consult carefully. Although it is not the custom to pay beforehand, yet, for fear I should forget it, and to have done with it, here is . . . (*He hands them some money, and each one, on receiving it, makes a different gesture.*)

SCENE III.—MM. DESFONANDRES, TOMES, MACROTON, BAHIS. (*They all sit down and begin to cough.*)

M. DES. Paris is marvelously large, and one has to take long journeys when business is a little brisk.

M. To. I am glad to say that I have got a wonderful mule for that; and that one would hardly believe what a deal of ground he takes me over daily.

M. Des. I have got an astonishing horse, and it is an indefatigable animal.

M. To. Do you know the ground my mule has been over to-day? I have been, first, close by the Arsenal; from the Arsenal, to the end of the faubourg Saint Germain; from the faubourg Saint Germain, to the lower part of the Marais; from the lower part of the Marais, to the Porte Saint-Honoré; from the Porte Saint-Honoré, to the faubourg Saint-Jacques; from the faubourg Saint-Jacques, to the Porte de Richelieu; from the Porte de Richelieu, here; and from here, I have yet to go to the Place Royale.[10]

M. Des. My horse has done all that to-day; and, besides, I have been to see a patient at Ruel.[11]

M. To. But, by the bye, which side do you take in the quarrel between the two physicians Theophrastus and Artemius? for it is a matter that divides our profession.

M. Des. I? I am for Artemius.

M. To. So am I. It is true that his advice killed the patient, as we have experienced, and that Theophrastus's was certainly much better; but the latter is wrong in the circumstances, and ought not to have been of a different opinion from his senior. What do you say?

M. Des. Certainly. We ought at all times to preserve the professional etiquette, whatever may happen.

M. To. For my part, I am excessively strict on that subject, except among friends. The other day three of us were called in to consult with an outsider;[12] but I stopped the whole affair, and would hold no consultation unless things were conducted according to etiquette. The people of the house did what they could and the case grew worse; but I would not give way, and the patient bravely died during the contention.

M. Des. It is highly proper to teach people how to behave, and to show them their inexperience.[13]

M. To. A dead man is but a dead man, and of very little consequence; but professional etiquette neglected does great harm to the whole body of physicians.

SCENE IV. — Sganarelle, MM. Tomes, Desfonandres, Macroton, Bahis.

Sgan. Gentlemen, my daughter is growing worse; I beg you to tell me quickly what you have decided on.

M. To. (*To M. Desfonandres.*) The word is with you, sir.

M. Des. No, sir; it is for you to speak if you please.

M. To. You are jesting.

M. Des. I shall not speak first.

M. To. Sir.

M. Des. Sir.

Sgan. For mercy's sake, gentlemen, drop these ceremonies, and consider that matters are urgent.

(*They all four speak at the same time.*)

M. To. Your daughter's complaint . . .

M. Des. The opinion of all these gentlemen . . .

M. Mac. After hav-ing care-fully considered . . .

M. Ba. In order to deduce . . .

Sgan. Ah! gentlemen, one at a time, pray . . .

M. To. Sir, we have duly argued upon your daughter's complaint, and my own opinion is, that it proceeds from the overheating of the blood, consequently I would have her bled as soon as possible.

M. Des. And I say that her illness arises from a putrefaction of humors, caused by too great repletion; consequently I would have her given an emetic.

M. To. I maintain that an emetic will kill her.

M. Des. And I, that bleeding will be the death of her.

M. To. It is like you to set up for a clever man!

M. Des. Yes, it is like me; and I can, at any rate, cope with you in all kinds of knowledge.

M. To. Do you recollect the man you killed a few days ago?

M. Des. Do you recollect the lady you sent to the other world three days ago?

M. To. (*To Sganarelle.*) I have given you my opinion.

M. Des. (*To Sganarelle.*) I have told you what I think.

M. To. If you do not have your daughter bled directly, she is a dead woman. (*Exit.*)

M. Des. If you have her bled, she will not be alive a quarter of an hour afterwards. (*Exit.*)

—

SCENE V.—Sganarelle, MM. Macroton, Bahis.

Sgan. Which of the two am I to believe? And who can decide amidst such conflicting opinions? Gentlemen, I beseech you to guide me, and to tell me, dispassionately, the best means of relieving my daughter.

M. Mac. (*Drawling out his words.*) Sir, in these kind-of-ca-ses, one must pro-ceed ve-ry care-fully, and do no-thing in-con-si-der-ate-ly, as the say-ing is; the more so, as the mis-takes one may make, ac-cord-ing to our mas-ter Hip-po-cra-tes, have the most fatal con-se-quen-ces.

M. Ba. (*Jerking out his words hastily.*) That is true enough, one must take great care what one does; for this is not child's play; and, when a mistake has been made, it is not easy to rectify it, nor make good what one has spoilt: *experimentum periculosum.* It is, therefore, as well to argue beforehand, to weigh things duly, to consider the constitution of people, to examine the causes of the complaint, and to decide upon the remedies to be adopted.

SGAN. (*Aside.*) One moves like a tortoise, while the other gallops like a post-horse.

M. MAC. Yes, sir, to come to the fact, I find that your daugh-ter has a chro-nic dis-ease, to which she will suc-cumb if re-lief be not giv-en to her, the more as the symp-toms give in-di-ca-tions of e-mit-ting fu-li-gi-nous and mor-di-cant ex-ha-la-tions which ir-ri-tate the ce-re-bral mem-branes. And these va-pors, which in Greek we call *At-mos*, are caus-ed by pu-trid, te-na-ci-ous, and con-glu-ti-nous hu-mors, which have ag-glo-mer-at-ed in the ab-do-men.[14]

M. BA. And as these humors were engendered there by a long succession of time, they have become hardened, and have assumed those malignant fumes that rise towards the region of the brain.

M. MAC. Con-se-quent-ly, in or-der to with-draw, to de-tach, to loos-en, to ex-pel, to e-va-cu-ate these said hu-mors, a ve-ry strong pur-ga-tive is ne-ces-sa-ry. But first of all, I think it as well, and it will not cause any in-con-ve-ni-ence, to em-ploy some lit-tle a-no-dyne me-di-ci-nes, that is to say, small e-mol-li-ent and de-ter-sive in-jec-ti-ons, re-fresh-ing ju-leps and sy-rups, which may be mix-ed with her bar-ley wa-ter.

M. BA. After that, we will come to the purgatives, and to the bleeding, which we shall repeat, if necessary.

M. MAC. We do not say that your daughter may not die for all this; but you will at least have the sat-is-fac-tion of hav-ing done some-thing, and the con-so-la-tion of know-ing that she died ac-cord-ing to rule.

M. BA. It is better to die according to rule than to recover in violation of it.

M. MAC. We have sin-ce-re-ly told you our o-pi-ni-ons.

M. BA. And we have spoken to you as to our own brother.

SGAN. (*To M. Macroton, drawling out his words.*) I am hum-bly o-bli-ged to you. (*To M. Bahis, sputtering.*) And I am very much obliged to you for the trouble you have taken.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE (*Alone*).

Here I am, a little more in the dark than I was before.[15] Zounds. I have got an idea! I will buy some Orvietan,[16] and I will make her take it. Orvietan is a kind of remedy that has done a great deal of good to many. Soho!

SCENE VII.—SGANARELLE, A QUACK.

SGAN. Will you, sir, kindly give me a box of your Orvietan, for which I shall pay you?

QUACK (*Sings*).

The gold of all climes which by the ocean are bound
Can e'er it repay this important secret?
My remedy cures, by its excellence rare,
More complaints than are counted up in a whole year:
The itch, the mange, the scurf, the fever, the plague,
The gout, the small-pox, ruptures, the measles,
Great power possesses my Orvietan.

SGAN. Sir, I am willing to believe that all the gold in the world could not pay for your remedy! but here is a piece of thirty sous, which you will take, if you please.

QUACK (*Sings*).

Admire how good I am. For a few paltry pence,
I dispense freely such marvelous treasure.
With this you may brave, quite devoid of all fear,
All the ills to which mortals are subject down here:
The itch, the mange, the scurf, the fever, the plague,
The gout, the small-pox, ruptures, the measles,
Great power possesses my Orvietan.

Second Entry.

Several Trivelins[17] and Scaramouches, servants of the quack, come in dancing.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—MM. Filerin, Tomes, Desfonandres.

M. Fil. Are you not ashamed, gentlemen, for men of your age to show so little discrimination, and to quarrel like young madcaps? Do you not plainly see the harm which these kinds of disputes do us with the world? and is it not sufficient that the learned perceive the dissensions and differences between our contemporaries and the old masters of our craft, without revealing to the public, by our quarrels and bickerings, the boasting of our art? As for me, I do not at all understand the mischievous policy of some of our brethren; and it must be admitted that all these controversies have somewhat strangely disparaged us, and that, if we are not careful, we shall ruin ourselves. I do not say so for my own interest, for, Heaven be praised, my little affairs are already settled. Whether it blows, rains, or hails, those who are dead are dead, and I have sufficient to be independent of the living; yet all these disputes do physic no good. Since Heaven has done us the favor, that, for so many centuries, people remain infatuated with us, let us not open their eyes by our extravagant cabals, and let us take advantage of their folly as quietly as possible. We are not the only ones, as you know full well, who try to make the best of human foibles. The whole study of the greatest part of mankind tends towards that; and every

one endeavors to speculate on man's weakness, in order to derive some benefit from them. Flatterers, for example, seek to profit by men's love for praise, by giving them all the vain incense they crave; it is an art by which, as we may see, large fortunes are made. Alchemists seek to profit by the passion for wealth by promising mountains of gold to those who listen to them; the drawers of horoscopes, by their deceitful prophecies, profit by the vanity and ambition of credulous minds. But the greatest failing in men is their love of life; by our pompous speeches we benefit by it, and know how to take advantage of the veneration for our profession with which the fear of death inspires them. Let us, therefore, maintain ourselves in that esteem in which their foibles have placed us, and let us agree before our patients, so as to claim for ourselves the credit of the happy issue of the complaint, and to throw on Nature all the blunders of our art. Let us not, I say, foolishly destroy the happy accident of an error, which gives bread to so many people, and which allows us to raise everywhere such beautiful estates with the money of those whom we have sent to the grave.[18]

M. To. You are right in all that you say; but sometimes one cannot control one's temper.

M. Fil. Come, gentlemen, lay aside all animosity, and make up your quarrel on the spot.

M. Des. I consent. Let him allow me to have my way with the emetic for the patient in question; and I will let him have his with the first patient he shall be concerned with.

M. Fil. Nothing could be better said, and that is reasonable.

M. Des. Very well, that is settled.

M. Fil. Shake hands then. Farewell. Another time, show more tact.

SCENE II.—M. Tomes, M. Desfonandres, Lisette.

Lis. What! gentlemen, you are here, and you do not think of repairing the wrong done to the medical profession?

M. To. What now? What is the matter?

Lis. Some insolent fellow has had the impudence to encroach upon your trade, and, without your prescription, has killed a man by running a sword clean through his body.

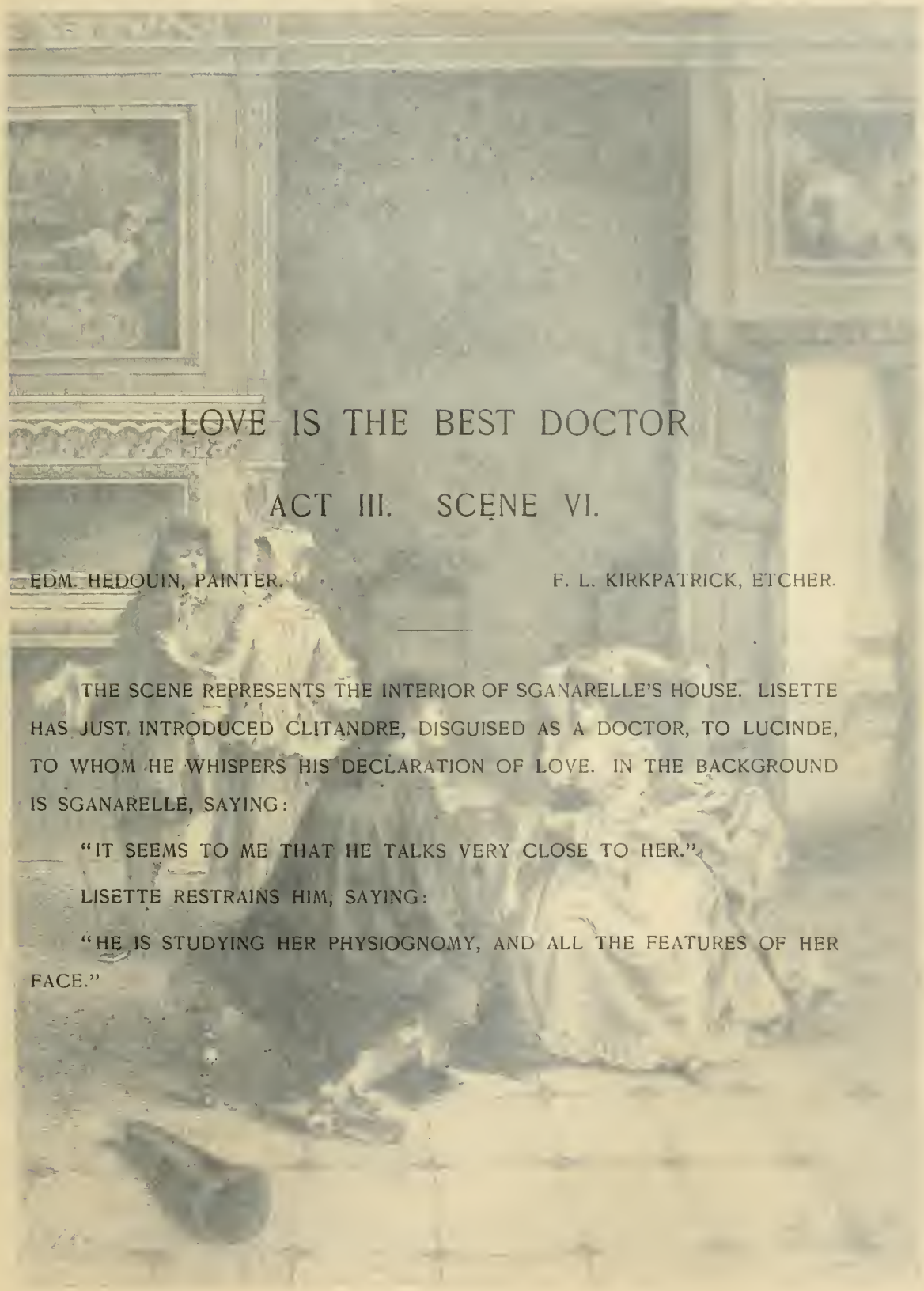
M. To. Look you here, you may laugh at us now; but you shall fall into our hands one of these days.

Lis. If ever I have recourse to you, I give you leave to kill me.

SCENE III.—Clitandre, *disguised as a physician*, Lisette.

Clit. Well, Lisette, what do you think of my disguise? Do you believe that I can trick the good man in these clothes? Do I look all right thus?

Lis. It could not be better; and I have been waiting impatiently for you. Heaven has given me the most humane disposition in the world, and I cannot bear to see two lovers sigh for one another, without entertaining a charitable tenderness towards them, and an ardent wish to relieve the ills which they are suffering. I mean, no matter at what cost, to free Lucinde from the tyranny to which she is subjected, and to confide her to your care. I liked you at first sight: I am a good judge of people, and she could not have made a better choice. Love risks extraordinary things, and we have concocted a little scheme, which may perhaps be successful. All our measures are



LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR

ACT III. SCENE VI.

EDM. HEDOUIN, PAINTER. F. L. KIRKPATRICK, ETCHER.

THE SCENE REPRESENTS THE INTERIOR OF SGANARELLE'S HOUSE. LISETTE HAS JUST INTRODUCED CLITANDRE, DISGUISED AS A DOCTOR, TO LUCINDE, TO WHOM HE WHISPERS HIS DECLARATION OF LOVE. IN THE BACKGROUND IS SGANARELLE, SAYING:

"IT SEEMS TO ME THAT HE TALKS VERY CLOSE TO HER."

LISETTE RESTRAINS HIM, SAYING:

"HE IS STUDYING HER PHYSIOGNOMY, AND ALL THE FEATURES OF HER FACE."

SCENE II.—M. Tomes, M. Desfonandres, Lisette.

Lis. What! gentlemen, you are here, and you do not think of repairing the wrong done to the medical profession?

M. To. What now? What is the matter?

Lis. Some insolent fellow has had the impudence to encroach upon your trade, and, without your prescription, has killed a man by running a sword clean through his body.

M. To. Look you here, you may laugh at us now; but you shall fall into our hands one of these days.

[illegible] ever have recourse to you, I give you leave to kill me.

ACT III.

EDM. HEDOUIN, PAINTER.

[illegible], *disguised as a phy-*

[illegible] think of

[illegible] been w[illegible]ty for you. Heaven [illegible] in the world, and I cannot bear to see two lovers sigh for one another, without entertaining a [illegible] and an ardent wish to relieve the ills which they are suffering. I mean, no matter at what cost, to free Lucinde from the tyranny to which she is subjected, and to confide her to your care. I liked you at first sight: I am a good judge of people, and she could not have made a better choice. Love risks extraordinary things, and we have concocted a little scheme, which may perhaps be successful. All our measures are

already taken: the man we have to deal with is not one of the sharpest; and if this trick fail, we shall find a thousand other ways to encompass our end. Just wait here a little, I shall come back to fetch you. (*Clitandre retires to the far end of the stage.*)

SCENE IV.—SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. Hurrah! hurrah! sir.

SGAN. What is the matter?

LIS. Rejoice.

SGAN. At what?

LIS. Rejoice, I say.

SGAN. Tell me what it is about, and then I shall rejoice, perhaps.

LIS. No. I wish you to rejoice first, I wish you to sing, to dance.

SGAN. On what grounds?

LIS. On my bare word.

SGAN. Be it so. (*He sings and dances.*) La, lera, la, la, la, lera, la. What the deuce!

LIS. Your daughter is cured, sir.

SGAN. My daughter is cured?

LIS. Yes. I have brought you a doctor, but a doctor of importance, who works wonderful cures, and who laughs at the other physicians.

SGAN. Where is he?

LIS. I shall bring him in.

SGAN. (*Alone.*) It remains to be seen if he will do more than the others.

SCENE V.—CLITANDRE, *disguised as a physician*, SGANARELLE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*Leading Clitandre.*) Here he is.

SGAN. That doctor has not much beard, as yet.

LIS. Knowledge is not measured by the beard, and his skill does not lie in his chin.

SGAN. Sir, they tell me that you have some capital receipts for relieving the bowels.

CLIT. My remedies, sir, are different from those of other physicians. They use emetics, bleeding, drugs, and injections; but I cure by words, sounds, letters, talismans, and rings.

LIS. Did I not tell you so?

SGAN. A great man this!

LIS. Sir, as your daughter is yonder, ready dressed, in her chair, I shall bring her here.

SGAN. Yes, do.

CLIT. (*Feeling Sganarelle's pulse.*) Your daughter is very ill, sir.

SGAN. You can tell that here?

CLIT. Yes, by the sympathy which exists between father and daughter.

SCENE VI.—SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, CLITANDRE, LISETTE.

LIS. (*To Clitandre.*) Sir, here is a chair near her. (*To Sganarelle.*) Come, let us leave them to themselves.

SGAN. Why so? I wish to remain here.

LIS. Are you jesting? We must leave them. A doctor has a hundred things to ask, which it is not decent for a man to hear. (*Sganarelle and Lisette retire.*)

CLIT. (*Softly to Lucinde.*) Ah! lady, how great is my delight! and how little do I know how to begin my discourse! As long as I spoke to you only with my eyes, it seemed to me that I had a hundred things to say; and now that I have the opportunity of speaking to you, as I wished, I remain silent, and my great joy prevents my utterance.

Luc. I may say the same; and I feel, like you, thrills of joy which prevent me from speaking.

Clit. Ah! madam, how happy should I be, if it were true that you feel all I do, and that I were allowed to judge of your heart by mine. But, may I at least believe, dear lady, that I owe to you the idea of this happy scheme which enables me to enjoy your presence.

Luc. If you do not altogether owe the thought to me, you are, at any rate, my debtor for having gladly approved of the proposal.

Sgan. (*To Lisette.*) It seems to me that he talks very close to her.

Lis. He is studying her physiognomy, and all the features of her face.

Clit. (*To Lucinde.*) Will you be constant, dear lady, in these favors which you are bestowing upon me?

Luc. But you, will you be firm in the resolutions which you have taken?

Clit. Ah! madam, till death. I desire nothing so much as to be yours; and I shall prove it to you.

Sgan. (*To Clitandre.*) Well! how does our patient? She seems a little more cheerful.

Clit. That is because I have already tried upon her one of the remedies which my art teaches me. As the mind has a great influence on the body, and as it is from the first that diseases most generally arise, my custom is to cure the mind before dealing with the body. I have therefore studied this young lady's looks, her features, and the lines of both her hands, and by the knowledge which Heaven has bestowed upon me, I have discovered she is ill in mind, and that the whole of her complaint arises only from a disordered imagination, from an inordinate desire of being married. As for myself, I think nothing more extravagant and ridiculous than this hankering after marriage.

Sgan. (*Aside.*) A clever fellow this!

Clit. And I have and always shall have, a frightful dislike to it.

Sgan. (*Aside.*) A great doctor this!

Clit. But as we must humor the imagination of patients, and as I have perceived in her a wandering of the mind, and even that there was great danger in not giving her prompt relief, I have taken her at her foible, and told her that I came here to solicit her hand from you. Suddenly her countenance changed, her complexion cleared, her eyes became animated; and if you will leave her for a few days in this error, you will see that we shall cure her.

Sgan. Indeed, I do not mind.

Clit. After that, we shall apply other means to cure her of this fancy.

Sgan. Yes, that will do very well. Listen! my girl, this gentleman wishes to marry you, and I have told him that I give my consent.

Luc. Alas! can it be possible?

Sgan. Of course.

Luc. But really, in earnest?

Sgan. Certainly.

Luc. (*To Clitandre.*) What! You wish to be my husband?

Clit. Yes, madam.

Luc. And my father consents to it?

Sgan. Yes, my child.

Luc. Ah, how happy I am! if that is true.

Clit. Doubt it not, madam. My love for you, and my ardent wish to be your husband, do not date from to-day, I came only for this; and, if you wish me to tell you the plain truth, this dress is nothing but a mere disguise; I acted the physician only to get near to you, and the more easily to obtain what I desire.

Luc. These are signs of a very tender love, and I am fully sensible of them.

LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR

ACT III. SCENE VI.

JACQUES LEMAN, PAINTER. GERY BICHARD, ETCHER.

CLITANDRE, SEATED CLOSE TO LUCINDE, DECLARES TO HER HIS LOVE. "AH! LADY, HOW GREAT IS MY DELIGHT! AND HOW LITTLE DO I KNOW HOW TO BEGIN MY DISCOURSE."

IN THE BACKGROUND, LISETTE RESTRAINS SGANARELLE, WHO WISHES TO HEAR WHAT THE DOCTOR SAYS TO LUCINDE. TO THE LEFT, THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR, ARE SEEN THE MUSICIANS BROUGHT BY CLITANDRE. THE WALLS OF THE CHAMBER ARE HUNG WITH TAPESTRIES.

LUC. I may say the same; and I feel, like you, thrills of joy which prevent me from speaking.

CLIT. Ah! madam, how happy should I be, if it were true that you feel all I do, and that I were allowed to judge of your heart by mine. But, may I at least believe, dear lady, that I owe to you the idea of this happy scheme which enables me to enjoy your presence.

LUC. If you do not altogether owe the thought to me, you are, at any rate, my debtor for having [illegible] approved of the proposal.

SGAN. (*To [illegible]*) It seems to me that he talks very close to her.

LIS. He is studying her physiognomy, and all the features of her [illegible].

CLIT. (*To Lucinde.*) [illegible] stant, dear lady, in [illegible] are [illegible] upon me?

LUC. But you, will you [illegible] resolution which you have taken?

CLIT. Ah! madam, till death. I [illegible] nothing so much as to be your [illegible] prove it [illegible].

SGAN. (*To Clitandre.*) [illegible] our patient? She seems [illegible].

CLIT. That is [illegible] teaches me. As [illegible] great influence on the body, [illegible] is from the first that diseases most generally arise, my custom is to cure the mind before dealing with the body. I have therefore studied this young lady's [illegible] features, and the lines of both her [illegible] by the knowledge which Heaven [illegible] upon me, I have discovered she is ill in mind, and that the whole of her complaint [illegible] from a disordered imagination, [illegible] inordinate desire of being married. As [illegible] myself, I think nothing more extravagant and ridiculous than this hankering after marriage.

SGAN. (*Aside.*) A clever fellow this!

CLIT. And I have and always shall have, a frightful dislike to it.

SGAN. (*Aside.*) A great doctor this!

CLIT. But as we must humor the imagination of patients, and as I have perceived in her a wandering of the mind, and even that there was great danger in not giving her prompt relief, I have taken her at her foible, and told her that I came here to solicit her hand from you. Suddenly her countenance changed, her complexion cleared, her eyes became animated; and if you will leave her for a few days in this error, you will see that we shall cure her.

SGAN. Indeed, I do not mind.

CLIT. After that, we shall apply other means [illegible] her of this fancy.

[illegible] will do very well. Listen! [illegible] wishes to marry you, [illegible] consent.

LUC. [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] Who! You wish to [illegible] my husband?

[illegible]

LUC. And my father consents to it?

SGAN. Yes, my child.

LUC. Ah, how happy I am! if that is true.

CLIT. Doubt it not, madam. My love for you, and my ardent wish to be your husband, do not date from to-day, I came only for this; and, if you wish me to tell you the plain truth, this dress is nothing but a mere disguise; I acted the physician only to get near to you, and the more easily to obtain what I desire.

LUC. These are signs of a very tender love, and I am fully sensible of them.

JACQUES LEMAN

SGAN. (*Aside.*) Oh, poor silly girl! silly girl! silly girl!

LUC. You do consent then, father, to give me this gentleman for a husband?

SGAN. Yes, certainly. Come, give me your hand. Give me yours also, sir, for a moment.

CLIT. But, sir . . .

SGAN. (*With suppressed laughter.*) No, no, it is . . . to satisfy her mind. Take it. That is over.

CLIT. Accept, as a pledge of my faith, this ring which I give you. (*Softly to Sganarelle.*) It is a constellated ring, which cures aberrations of the mind.[19]

LUC. Let us draw up the contract, so that nothing may be wanting.

CLIT. I have no objections, madam. (*Softly to Sganarelle.*) I will bring the fellow who writes my prescriptions, and will make her believe that he is a notary.

SGAN. Just so.

CLIT. Hulloo! send up the notary I have brought with me.

LUC. What! you brought a notary with you?

CLIT. Yes, madam.

LUC. I am glad of that.

SGAN. Oh the poor silly girl! the silly girl!

SCENE VII.—THE NOTARY, CLITANDRE, SGANARELLE, LUCINDE, LISETTE.

(*Clitandre speaks softly to the Notary.*)

SGAN. (*To the Notary.*) Yes, sir, you are to draw up a contract for these two people. Write. (*To Lucinde.*) We are making the contract. (*To the Notary.*) I give her twenty thousand crowns as a portion. Write that down.

LUC. I am very much obliged to you, dear father.

NOT. That is done. You have only to sign it.

SGAN. That is a quickly drawn contract.

CLIT. (*To Sganarelle.*) But at least, sir . . .

SGAN. No, no, I tell you. Do we not all know . . . (*To the Notary.*) Come, hand him the pen to sign. (*To Lucinde.*) Come you, sign now, sign, sign. Well, I shall sign presently.

LUC. No, no, I will have the contract in my own hands.

SGAN. Well! there then. (*After having signed.*) Are you satisfied?

LUC. Better than you can imagine.

SGAN. That is all right, then, that is all right.

CLIT. I have not only had the precaution to bring a notary; I have also brought singers, musicians and dancers to celebrate the feast, and for our enjoyment. Let them come in. They are people I always have with me, and whom I daily make use of to calm, by their harmony and dancing, the troubles of the mind.

SCENE VIII.—COMEDY, THE BALLET, MUSIC.[20]

TOGETHER.

Without our aid, all humankind
Would soon become unhealthy.
We are indeed the best of all physicians.

COMEDY.

Would you dispel by easy means
Splenetic fumes that man is heir to,
Avoid Hippocrates, and come to us.

TOGETHER.

Without our aid, all humankind
Would soon become unhealthy.
We are indeed the best of all physicians.

(*While the Sports, Laughter and Pleasures are dancing together, Clitandre leads Lucinde away.*)

SCENE IX.—Sganarelle, Lisette, Music, The Ballet, Sports, Laughter, Pleasures.

Sgan. A pleasant way of curing people this! But where are my daughter and the doctor?

Lis. They are gone to finish the remaining part of the marriage.

Sgan. What do you mean by the marriage?

Lis. The fact is, sir, you have been cleverly done;[21] and the joke you thought to play remains the truth.

Sgan. The devil it does! (*He wishes to rush after Clitandre and Lucinde, the dancers restrain him.*) Let me go, let me go, I tell you. (*The dancers still keep hold of him.*) Again! (*They wish to make him dance by force.*) Plague take you all!

NOTES

[1] The Prologue is in the original in verse.

[2] It is more than probable that Molière played this part. In the inventory taken after his death, and given by M. E. Soulié, we find, "a box of clothes for the representation of the *Médecins*,—for this was the name often given to *Love is the best Doctor* by Molière's contemporaries,—consisting of a doublet of common satin, cut out on golden *roc* (*sic*), cloak and breeches of velvet, with a gold ground, adorned with a loop and buttons."

[3] Tiberio Fiorilli, an Italian actor, was born near Naples, in 1608, and died at Paris, on the 8th of December, 1694. He was much liked by Louis XIV., and acted the character of Scaramouch, a braggart, a poltroon, and a fool, always dressed in black, with a large white collar. In Italian, a skirmish is called *scarramuccia*: hence perhaps the name. Isaac Disraeli in his excellent chapter "The Pantomimical Characters" in the *Curiosities of Literature*, says: "When Charles V. entered Italy, a Spanish captain was introduced; a dreadful man he was too, if we are to be frightened by names: *Sangre e Fuego!* and *Matamoro!* His business was to deal in Spanish rhodomontades, to kick out the native Italian *Capitan*, in compliment to the Spaniards, and then to take a quiet caning from Harlequin, in compliment to themselves. When the Spaniards lost their influence in Italy, the Spanish Captain was turned into Scaramouch, who still wore the Spanish dress, and was perpetually in a panic. The Italians could only avenge themselves on the Spaniards in pantomime."

[4] It was not an ancient philosopher who said this. It is simply a wise saw of the Middle Ages, common to the French and the Italians, *qui terre a guerre a* and *chi compra terra compra terra compra guerra.*

[5] In *Le Tracas de Paris*, the Hubbub of Paris, described in burlesque verses by F. Colletet, written in 1665, and re-edited by the Bibliophile Jacob in 1859, I find a long and not very poetical description of this fair, which seems to have been frequented, if not by bad, at least by very mixed company. Formerly this fair lasted only eight days, then three weeks and finally three months; it was probably held in Molière's time where the church St. Laurent is now, Boulevard de Strassbourg.

[6] Lisette addresses Lucinde as "Madam" in the presence of her father. This seems to me to be ironical, as madam was used only in speaking to ladies of high nobility. When later, in Clitandre, the lover calls her by that same name, it appears to me to be done as a piece of flattery.

[7] Molière has also employed the beginning of this scene in *The Rogueries of Scapin.*

[8] Compare Shakespeare's Second Part of *King Henry IV.* (Act II., Scene 1), when Fang, being kept off by Falstaff and Bardolph, shouts "A rescue! a rescue!" and Hostess quickly exclaims, "Good people, bring a rescue or two!"

[9] The original has *entre-actre*, which might perhaps have been translated by "interlude."

[10] M. Tomès states, in detail, that he has been from one end of Paris to the other.

[11] Ruel, a village on the road to Saint Germain, was at that time (1665) a very fashionable residence; the Cardinal de Richelieu had a country seat there, under Louis XIII.

[12] A physician, who had not taken his degree in Paris, was called "an outsider," *un médecin de dehors.*

[13] The original has *leur montrer leur bec jaune.*

[14] This is the theory of "the humors" then in vogue amongst physicians. According to them, every disease arose from a superabundance of humors, which were either in too great quantity or of too bad a quality; the first was called plethora, and was supposed to be cured by copious bleedings; against the second, cacochymia, a frequent use of purgatives was recommended.

[15] The result of the consultation of the physicians is the same for Sganarelle as, in the *Phormio* (ii., 4) of Terence, the result of the consultation of the three lawyers Cratinus, Hegio, Crito. Demiphon, after hearing it, cries out, "*Incertior sum multo quam dudum* . . . I am much more uncertain than before."

[16] Towards the year 1639, a quack began to sell, on the Pont-Neuf in Paris, specifics against all maladies, and especially an antidote, the Orvietan, so called because it was prepared by a certain doctor Lupi, at Orvieto, a town in Italy. His real name was Jacques Ovyn, and he had a brother, a clergyman, who, as well as himself, was called *de l' Orviétan*; hence Jal, in his *Dictionnaire Critique*, supposes that their father must already

have sold this electuary. His probable successor was Christoforo Contugi, who called himself "*Antidotaire du Roi*," and who, according to Guy-Pating, bribed twelve Paris physicians, who had afterwards to ask their pardon from the Faculty of Paris, to give him a certificate. According to a note of M. Pauly, in the edition of Molière, published by M. Lemerre, Paris, Vol. IV., Orvietan was an antidote, of which the secret was communicated, in 1560, by Cardinal Deodati to his apothecary, Martin Guerche. It was then called *antitan*, which means antidote of the time. It was named Orvietan by Hieronimo Feranti, a native of Orvieto, whose successor, Giovanni Vitrario, transmitted the recipe for it to his son-in-law, Christoforo Contugi, who sold it at Paris, in virtue of a royal privilege, dated 9th April, 1647. In the thirteenth chapter of *Kenilworth*, Sir Walter Scott describes how Wayland successfully endeavored to collect materials for making the Orvietan, or Venice treacle, as it was sometimes called,—understood to be a sovereign remedy against poison.

[17] Domenico Lucatelli, was an Italian comedian, who died in 1671, and acted at Paris the part of Trivelin, a kind of harlequin.

[18] A great part of Dr. Filerin's speech sets forth some of Montaigne's ideas, contained in the *Essays*, Book II., chapter xxxvii. Molière repeats some of the same ideas, clothed in dog-Latin, and puts them into the opening speech of the president of the learned assembly of persons connected with the medical profession, in the Third Interlude of *The Hypochondriac*.

[19] These rings, sometimes called also "planetary rings," had certain stars or planets engraved upon them, and were supposed to soothe the mind; a reminiscence of the feeling that stars influenced human destiny. The metals from which these rings were made appear also to be thought to have some mysterious power, for the seven metals—gold, silver, mercury, copper, iron, tin, and lead,—were under the influence of the Sun, the Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. If the rings were composed of several metals, then, of course, different influences were at work; if made of all the metals—the *electron* of Paracelsus—they possessed the highest power. I imagine that the metals used in the manufacture of such rings must also have had some connection with the horoscope of the person for whom it was made.

[20] Here the words "*third entry*" ought to come, or perhaps above the words "while the sports," etc., but nothing is given in the original copies I have compared.

[21] The original has *la bécasse est bridée*, the woodcock is caught, an allusion to the snare in which those birds catch themselves.

LIST OF ENGRAVINGS

LOVE IS THE BEST DOCTOR

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THE MISANTHROPE

ON A LARGE TABLET IS ENGRAVED THE TITLE OF THE PLAY. ON EACH SIDE OF IT ARE FIGURES OF WOMEN, TERMINATING IN SCROLLS, AND HOLDING BRANCHES OF LAUREL. ABOVE ARE THE ARMS OF MOLIERE, AND A CROWN MADE OF TWO LAUREL BRANCHES. LAUREL, SYMBOLICAL OF THE FAME OF THE POET AND OF HIS WORK, IS THE PRINCIPAL OF THE GENERAL DECORATION AND OF THE DETAILS.

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JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

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THE
MISANTHROPE
JACQUES LEMAN

TITLE OF 1667

THE FRAME REPRESENTS AN ARCHITECTURAL PORTICO. ON EACH SIDE DANCING SATYRS—MALE AND FEMALE—HOLD LIGHTED TORCHES. IN THE CENTRE, BELOW THE TITLE, IS ALCESTE, SEATED IN AN ARM-CHAIR, ONE LEG THROWN OVER THE OTHER, BROODING OVER HIS DISAPPOINTMENTS. ABOVE ARE TWO WINGED FIGURES OF FAME, BACK TO BACK, BETWEEN WHICH ARE THE ARMS OF MOLIERE. AT THE BOTTOM, EACH SIDE OF THE CARTOUCHE BEARING THE DATE, ARE SEATED CHILDREN, BEARING BRANCHES OF LAUREL.

TITLE OF 1667

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

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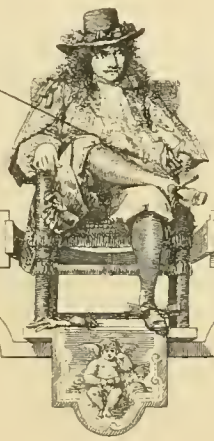
LE

MISANTROPE

COMEDIE

PAR

J.B.P. DE MOLIERE



A PARIS

CHEZ JEAN RIBOU, AU PALAIS

VIS A VIS LA PORTE DE L'EGLISE DE LA SAINTE CHAPELLE

A L'IMAGE SAINT LOUIS

M. DC. LXVII

AVEC

PRIVILEGE DU ROY

Par grâce et Privilège du Roy, donné à Fontainebleau, le 21 Juin, 1666, signé: "Par le Roy [en son] Conseil: *Béraud*," il est permis à J.-B. P. DE MOLIÈRE, Comédien de la Troupe de Monsieur le Duc d'Orléans, de faire imprimer, vendre et débiter une Comédie par luy composée, intitulée: *Le Misantrope*, pendant cinq années, et défenses sont faites à tous autres de l'imprimer, ny vendre d'autre édition que de celle de l'Exposant, ou de ceux qui auront droict de luy, à peine de quinze cens livres d'amende; confiscation des exemplaires contrefaits, et de tous despens, dommages et intérests, comme il est porté plus amplement par lesdites Lettres.

Et ledit Sieur DE MOLIÈRE a cédé son droict de Privilège à Jean Ribou, Marchand Libraire à Paris, pour en jouir suivant l'accord-fait entr'eux.

Registré sur le Livre de la Communauté.

Signé: PIGET, Syndic.

Achevé d'imprimer pour la première fois le 24 Decembre, 1666.

INTRODUCTORY NOTICE

The Misanthrope, Molière's masterpiece, according to Voltaire, was first acted on the 4th of June, 1666, at the theatre of the Palais Royal, and, in spite of what has generally been believed, was no complete failure; for it was represented twenty-one consecutive times.[1] It is, however, not to be expected that a comedy like *The Misanthrope* should please the general public as much as a farce. But those who admired noble thoughts, select language, accurate delineations of character, and a perfect and entertaining style, placed this comedy from the very beginning where it is now generally put, with the common consent of all students of sound literature, in the foremost rank of the good comedies of Molière.

The subject of a misanthrope has been treated at all times and in all literatures. Antiquity possessed a proverbial misanthrope, which Plutarch mentions in his *Lives of Illustrious Men* (Timon) in the following words:

"Anthony in the meantime forsook the city and the society of his friends, and retired to a small house which he had built himself near Pharos, on a mound he had cast up in the sea. In this place, sequestered from all commerce with mankind, he affected to live like Timon, because there was a resemblance in their fortunes. He had been deserted by his friends, and their ingratitude had put him out of humor with his own species.

"This Timon was a citizen of Athens, and lived about the time of the Peloponnesian war, as appears from the comedies of Aristophanes and Plato in which he is exposed as the hater of mankind. Yet, although he hated mankind in general, he caressed the bold and impudent boy Alcibiades, and being asked the reason of this by Apemantus, who expressed some surprise at it, he answered, it was because he foresaw that he would plague the people of Athens. Apemantus was the only one he admitted to his society, and he was his friend in point of principle. At the feast of sacrifices for the dead, these two dined by themselves, and when Apemantus observed that the feast was excellent, Timon answered, "It would be so if you were not here." Once, in an assembly of the people, he mounted the rostrum, and the novelty of the thing occasioned a universal silence and expectation; at length he said, "People of Athens, there is a fig-tree in my yard, on which many worthy citizens have hanged themselves, and as I have determined to build upon the spot, I thought it necessary to give this public notice, that such as choose to have recourse to this tree for the aforesaid purpose may repair to it before it is cut down."

"He was buried at Halae near the sea, and the water surrounded his tomb in such a manner that he was even then inaccessible to mankind.

"The following epitaph is inscribed on his monument:

'At last I've bid the knaves farewell;
Ask not my name—but go—to hell.'

"It is said that he wrote this epitaph himself. That which is commonly repeated is by Callimachus.

'My name is Timon, knaves begone!
Curse me, but come not near my stone!'

"These are some of the many anecdotes we have concerning Timon."

In Lucian's "Dialogues of the Dead," Dialogue XXIV., Timon is represented as finding fault with Jupiter about his half-heartedness, twitting him with his want of energy, that when they despoiled his temples and robbed him on Olympus, he dared not set the dogs after them, nor call the neighbors to his assistance, and compares his own case with that of Jove. Jupiter does not altogether like this, and wishes to know from Mercury who that dirty fellow is, standing at the foot of Hymettus, abusing him—coming to the conclusion that it must be some philosopher railing against him. Upon being informed by his son who he really is, the Thunderer expresses his surprise and sorrow at the change that has taken place in the condition of the once so wealthy man, and inquires the causes of this decline. "To speak simply," answered Mercury, "benevolence has ruined him, also philanthropy and compassion towards all in need; but to speak truly, folly and simplicity in choosing his friends, who were only so many vultures gnawing his liver, treating him with disdain afterwards, when he was no longer useful, and even pretending not to know his name." Jove now begins to remember Timon in his better days, and chides himself for his neglect in having forgotten him; alleging, however, as the cause, the noise which the perjured and the wicked make around him, not leaving him a moment's leisure to look into Attica. He commands Mercury to take Plutus with him, to seek Timon, and remain with him, even should he endeavor to drive them from his house by repeating his former acts of benevolence. He also promises revenge upon those who have been ungrateful to Timon when his thunderbolts shall be repaired, which are out of order just then, he having hurled them at the sophist Anaxagoras, who was persuading his disciples that the gods did not exist at all. Plutus refuses to go to Timon because he insulted him, and divided him amongst flatterers and parasites; and begs Jove to send him to those who will appreciate him, and not squander him in benevolence. Jupiter informs Plutus that Timon shall not do so again, having gained experience by his misfortunes; at the same time telling him that he has often complained of different treatment by being completely imprisoned under bars and keys. Plutus gives him to understand that he prefers the middle way, and does not like the greed of some, any more than the lavishness of others. He prepares to go in company with Mercury to find Timon. They meet with him close at hand, digging the soil. Plutus thinks that, surrounded as he is by Labor, Wisdom, Strength and Fortitude,

they cannot do much for him, and wishes them to leave him. Poverty, who is closely attending Timon, resents the intrusion of Plutus and Mercury, telling them that he had formed the man perfectly to his work, which they would only undo again, and Timon also reviles them for having come to disturb him, threatening to strike them. The two gods reveal themselves to him, offering him wealth. Timon tells Plutus to go and hang himself, and offers to smash him to pieces. Plutus intends to depart, Mercury persuades Timon to reconsider his decision, but Timon persists, telling them he has no need of their services, that his spade is wealth enough, and that he will be perfectly happy if but left alone, asking them to convey his thanks to Jupiter for his kind attentions, but persistently refusing to have aught to do with Plutus, ascribing all his misfortunes to the blind god, who offers to defend himself from the accusations, Timon permitting him to do so in a few words only. Timon reluctantly consents to become rich again in obedience to Jupiter, upon which all his parasites anew assemble round him.

The above sketches fairly represent the idea which antiquity formed of a misanthrope.

Molière's play of *The Misanthrope*, his only comedy which represents courtiers and courtly people, opens with great spirit, and shows us the hero Alceste attacking his friend Philinte for being too lenient and tolerant to the foibles of mankind, whilst the defense of the latter is plausible, perhaps too much so. Then we have Oronte, the high-born but wretched poet who, offended by Alceste's blunt, honest opinion, goes away fuming and fretting. The coquettish, evil-speaking Célimène, beloved by Alceste, spurns an honest man's affection, through vanity and thoughtlessness, enlivens the comedy, and is finally rewarded and cruelly mortified by being discarded. Such men as Acaste and Clitandre, represent the butterflies of society, fluttering from one drawing-room to another, but instead of distilling, as from flowers, sweet odors, only carrying venomous poison with glib and smooth small talk. The charming Miss Eliante, whose beauty is enhanced by modest behavior, finally receives the hand of Philinte.

I think no better delineation has been given of this play than the following one by M. Taine, in his "History of English Literature:"—"A dozen conversations make up the play of *The Misanthrope*. The same situation, five or six times renewed, is the whole of *l' École des Femmes*. These pieces are made out of nothing. They have no need of incidents, they find ample space in the compass of one room and one day, without surprises, without decoration, with an arras and four arm-chairs. This paucity of matter throws out the ideas more clearly and quickly; in fact, their whole aim is to bring those ideas prominently forward; the simplicity of the subject, the progress of the action, the linking together of the scenes,—to this everything tends. At every step clearness increases, the impression is deepened, vice stands out: ridicule is piled up, until, before so many apt and united appeals, laughter forces its way and breaks forth. And this laughter is not a mere outburst of physical amusement; it is the judgment which incites it. The writer is a philosopher, who brings us into contact with a universal truth by a particular example. We understand through him, as through La Bruyère or Nicole, the force of prejudice, the obstinacy of conventionality, the blindness of love. The couplets of his dialogue, like the arguments of their treatises, are but the worked-out proof and

the logical justification of a preconceived conclusion. We philosophize with him on humanity; we think because he has thought. And he has only thought thus in the character of a Frenchman, for an audience of French men of the world. In him we taste a national pleasure. French refined and systematic intelligence, the most exact in seizing on the subordination of ideas, the most ready in separating ideas from matter, the most fond of clear and tangible ideas, finds in him its nourishment and its echo. None who have sought to show us mankind, has led us by a straighter and easier mode to a more distinct and speaking portrait. I will add, to a more pleasing portrait,—and this is the main talent of comedy: it consists in keeping back what is hateful; and observe that that which is hateful abounds in the world. As soon as you will paint the world truly, philosophically, you meet with vice, injustice, and everywhere indignation; amusement flees before anger and morality. . . . In *The Misanthrope*, is not the spectacle of a loyally sincere and honest man, very much in love, whom his virtue finally overwhelms with ridicule and drives from society, a sad sight to see? . . . How everything changes under the hand of the mercurial Frenchman! how all this human ugliness is blotted out! how amusing is the spectacle which Molière has arranged for us! how we ought to thank the great artist for having transformed his subjects so well! At last we have a cheerful world, on canvas at least; we could not have it otherwise, but this we have. How pleasant it is to forget truth! what an art is that which divests us of ourselves! what a point of view which converts the contortions of suffering into funny grimaces! Gaiety has come upon us, the dearest possession of a Frenchman. The soldiers of Villars used to dance that they might forget they had no longer any bread. Of all French possessions, too, it is the best. This gift does not destroy thought, but it masks it. In Molière, truth is at the bottom, but concealed; he has heard the sobs of human tragedy, but he prefers not to re-echo them. It is quite enough to feel our wounds smart; let us not go to the theatre to see them again. Philosophy, while it reveals them, advises us not to think of them too much. Let us enliven our condition with the gaiety of easy conversation and light wit, as we would the chamber of sickness. . . . Let Alceste be grumpy and awkward. It is in the first place true, because our more valiant virtues are only the outbreaks of a temper out of harmony with circumstances; but, in addition, it will be amusing. His mishaps will cease to make him the martyr of justice; they will only be the consequences of a cross-grained character. . . . Molière is the only man who gives us models without getting pedantic, without trenching on the tragic, without growing solemn.

"This model is the 'respectable man,' as the phrase was, Philinte, Ariste, Clitandre, Eraste; there is no other who can at the same time instruct and amuse us. His talent has reflection for its basis, but it is cultivated by the world. His character has honesty for its basis, but it is in harmony with the world. You may imitate him without transgressing either reason or duty; he is neither a coxcomb nor a roisterer. You can imitate him without neglecting your interests or making yourself ridiculous; he is neither an ignoramus nor unmannerly. He has read and understands the jargon of Trissotin and Lycidas, but in order to pierce them through and through, to beat them with their own arguments, to set the gallery in a roar at their expense, he will discuss even morality and religion, but in a style so natural, with

proofs so clear, with warmth so genuine, that he interests women, and is listened to by men of the world. He knows man and reasons about him, but in such brief sentences, such living delineations, such pungent humor, that his philosophy is the best of entertainments. He is faithful to his ruined mistress, his calumniated friend, but gracefully, without fuss. All his actions, even noble ones, have an easy way about them which adorns them; he does nothing without pleasantness. His great talent is knowledge of the world; he shows it not only in the trivial circumstances of every-day life, but in the most passionate scenes, the most embarrassing positions. A noble swordsman wants to take Philinte, the 'respectable man,' as his second in a duel; he reflects a moment, excuses himself in a score of phrases, and, 'without playing the Hector,' leaves the bystanders convinced that he is no coward. Armande insults him, then throws herself in his arms; he politely averts the storm, declines the reconciliation with the most loyal frankness, and without employing a single falsehood, leaves the spectators convinced that he is no boor. When he loves Eliante, who prefers Alceste, and whom Alceste may possibly marry, he proposes to her with a complete delicacy and dignity, without lowering himself, without recrimination, without wronging himself or his friend. When Oronte reads him a sonnet, he does not assume in the fop a nature which he has not, but praises the conventional verses in conventional language, and is not so clumsy as to display a poetical judgment which would be out of place. He takes at once his tone from the circumstances; he perceives instantly what he must say and what be silent about, in what degree and what gradations, what exact expedient will reconcile truth and conventional propriety, how far he ought to go or where to take his stand, what faint line separates decorum from flattery, truth from awkwardness. On this narrow path he proceeds free from embarrassment or mistakes, never put out of his way by the shocks or changes of circumstances, never allowing the calm smile of politeness to quit his lips, never omitting to receive with a laugh of good humor the nonsense of his neighbor. This cleverness, entirely French, reconciles in him fundamental honesty and worldly breeding; without it, he would be altogether on the one side or the other. In this way comedy finds its hero half way between the *roué* and the preacher."

Thus far M. Taine. His definition of the respectable man *l'honnête homme*, does not, in my opinion, apply to Philinte, but is quite necessary in the present age, when *honnête homme* means no longer a well-born man and gentleman, as well as an honest man; hence Alceste says rightly to Oronte, in the second scene of the first act of *The Misanthrope*, "do not . . . forfeit the reputation you enjoy at court of being a man of sense and a gentleman *(honnête homme)*, to take from the hands of a greedy printer that of a ridiculous and wretched author." In the beginning of the seventeenth century, a certain Mons. Nicholas Faret, first secretary of the count of Harcourt—and who has gone down to posterity as an inveterate drinker, because his friend Saint-Amant made his name rhyme with *cabaret*, a public house—wrote a book, which was then in everybody's hand, called *L'Honeste homme ou l'Art de plaire à la Cour*. This book, a sort of "Handbook of Politeness," was first published in 1630, but several editions had been printed since that time, and it was still the fashionable guide-book of manners in 1666. It is probable that Molière got inspired by a description given by Faret

of *l'honnête homme*, when in love, which had been copied from Lucretius, and that our author then referred to the original Latin author, whose fourth canto of *De Natura Rerum* he utilizes for Eliante's description of the power of self-deception in love, in the fifth scene of the second act. Molière has also borrowed some lines from Lucretius, for the speech of the Master of Philosophy in the sixth scene of the second act of *The Citizen who Apes the Nobleman*. But thence to conclude that Molière had translated Lucretius, which translation has been lost to posterity, is going rather too far. The only biographer of Molière who mentions this is Grimarest (1659–1713), who is far from trustworthy, and who may have supposed that a whole translation of Lucretius existed, when only a few lines had been transposed.

It has been said that Molière, at the time he wrote *The Misanthrope*, endured the pangs of jealousy, and that he was shamefully betrayed by his wife, but could not resist loving her. It seems more than likely that, in Alceste's admiration for the spoiled beauty, Molière gave vent to his own feelings of mixed jealousy and admiration of his wife, and that our author's attempt to depict the hero of this play trying to free himself from the toils of feminine and personal charms, is only heightened in intensity and force by an impulse from within. Still, although we admit that these anecdotes about a great man may sometimes give the complexion of the times—as, for example, the story told about Shakespeare and Burbage—they are not seldom the mere groundless gossip of his professional friends and foes, the rakings of the tap-rooms frequented by the hangers-on of the great man, and even now and then the venomous utterings of the hero's enemies. This appears to have been the case with the accusations brought against Molière's wife, which are chiefly based on a libelous pamphlet, published nominally at Frankfort, but in reality in Holland, fifteen years after our author's death, and called: *La Fameuse comédienne, ou Histoire de la Guérin, auparavant femme et veuve de Molière*, and which, in my opinion, deserves not the smallest amount of credit. (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*.) There can be no doubt that Molière was jealous. This cannot be wondered at, when we find that he was about twenty years older than his wife, who appears to have been rather a coquette, with a great amount of levity, very fond of admiration, and nearly always moving about amidst a retinue of young and elegant courtiers, crowding round the favorite actress of the day to pay her homage. It is more than probable that Molière wrote the greater part of *The Misanthrope* during a season of illness and convalescence, and therefore the bitterness of his feelings must have increased a hundred-fold when he found himself alone in his sick-room, and his youthful spouse gadding about with the gaudy and sprightly noblemen. But this is really all that can be said, with any certainty, against Molière's wife.

It has also been stated that Molière attacked and satirized several noblemen in *The Misanthrope*, and took literary vengeance upon some of the supposed admirers of his wife, such as the Count de Guiche, the Abbé de Richelieu, and the Duke de Lauzun, whom he is said to have drawn in this play; as well as the Count de Saint Gilles in Timante; Madam de Longueville, or some other great lady—according to some even Madam Molière—in Célimène: the Duke de Saint-Aignan, in Oronte; Molière's friend Chapelle, in Philinte; Mademoiselle Debrie, in Eliante. Besides this, characters were found in real life for the prudish and slandering

Arsinoé, the ridiculous Cléonte, the reasoning Damon, the tiresome story-teller Géralde, the poor silly woman Bélise, the conceited Adraste, the foolish Cléon, the would-be witty Damis, and even "the great hulking booby of a viscount." This, like many other statements about our author's presumed personal attacks, may be probable, but has really never been proved. There is no doubt that personalities were then in fashion, and that Molière often used, and even sometimes abused, his powerful pen to describe, and to satirize, his rivals and his enemies. But as Urania says in *The School for Wives criticised* (See Vol. I., Scene 7), "Let us not apply to ourselves the points of general censure; let us profit by the lesson, if possible, without assuming that we are spoken against. All the ridiculous delineations which are drawn on the stage, should be looked on by everyone without annoyance. They are public mirrors, in which we must never pretend to see ourselves. To bruit it about that we are offended at being hit, is to state openly, that we are at fault."

Tradition also states that Molière intended Alceste as a portrait of the virtuous Charles de Ste.-Maure, Duke de Montausier, and that some of our author's enemies induced this nobleman to go and see *The Misanthrope*, but that, instead of being offended at Molière's sketch, he took it as a compliment, and said that he should be delighted to resemble such an honest man as Alceste.

An attempt has been made to draw a parallel between Molière's *Misanthrope* and Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. Though the nature of their subject may appear at the first glance, similar, nothing could be more opposite than these two personages. Timon becomes a misanthrope through sentiment and experience, for he has been shamefully abandoned by his pseudo-friends when in poverty, and hence his savage onslaughts on society: but Alceste was born splenetic. The one is continually showering gifts and favors around him, even on the most worthless objects, whilst the other would only have assisted a man if he were thoroughly honest and respectable. The character of Apemantus is, if anything, much more like Alceste's than that of the Athenian lord himself. Shakespeare's work points a moral at ingratitude and indiscriminate benevolence and its rewards: Molière's is satire against spleen. Alceste is a well-born, honorable, and wealthy man, who rails against society, with which he is angry, through an innate and exaggerated sentiment of honor; and although he is nearly always right in principle and theory, he is nearly always wrong in practice and form. He is unbendingly strict in the most trifling, as well as in the gravest, matters. He is sincere and earnest, but blunt and passionate; and it is through this very passion that he is betrayed into an exaggeration, and a quarrelsomeness which render him ridiculous and amusing. His is a sort of finnikin fastidiousness which is entirely absent in Timon. In fact, Shakespeare works with a Nasmyth's steam hammer to demolish the vices, while Molière, with due regard for the spirit of his age, and especially that of the king, uses an ordinary mallet, with which he does nearly as much execution as the Englishman, without exerting himself so powerfully.

It is doubtful if Molière would have been allowed the same latitude by Louis XIV., as Shakespeare was by Elizabeth, who never took the slightest notice of his attacks upon her father, Henry VIII. It may be safely asserted that the *Grand Monarque* was not averse to hear serious reasoning railed at and ridiculed, but that he would soon have interfered had the

prominent vices of the court been attacked too strongly. Philinte, the worldling, is but a strong reproduction of Ariste in *The School for Husbands*, and of Chrysalde in *The School for Wives*. That he has his reward at the end of the play—if it be a reward—by being made happy with the hand of Eliante, while the Misanthrope is left out in the cold, may be taken as a concession of Molière's to the prevailing feeling at the court, which was more likely to sympathize with Philinte, their representative, than to grieve over the sorrow of Alceste their antagonist. It must, however, be admitted that the only show of criticism which Molière displayed against the person of the king, is to be found in this play, because our author, in attacking the men who filled public offices, reflects on the monarch who appointed them.

Metaphysically considered, Alceste is not unlike Hamlet. Neither of them is fit to live in this world. Both feel they are powerless in changing the decrees of fate: but the causes which have produced that inability differ. In Alceste, it is a brusque candor, swooping unexpectedly down upon meretricious society; but Hamlet has "that within which passeth show," "the time is out of joint," and the will is puzzled by thinking of "the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveler returns."

The Misanthrope has been attacked and defended by so many eminent men, that we cannot do better than to give a short *résumé* of some of their opinions, and let the reader himself draw his own conclusions. Let us begin with those who attack him. First we have the celebrated morose philosopher, Jean Jacques Rousseau. If it be true that "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind," Rousseau must have felt some sympathy for the tetchy, irritable, well-meaning Alceste. In a letter to d'Alembert, he advances the following objections to Molière's play: "Alceste is a sincere, estimable, honest man, and the author makes him simply ridiculous. This alone would be without excuse. Moreover, Alceste is not a man-hater or Misanthrope, as the title of the piece implies, for in that case none of the audience would like to meet such a man, as the hero of the play, for whom they feel, at the bottom of their heart, a certain respect. The virtuous man is made ridiculous and is opposed to Philinte, one of those honest and fashionable men whose maxims are very much like those of a scoundrel; one of those gentle and even-tempered optimists who are satisfied with everybody and everything; who never imagine anybody can be hungry, so long as they can sit down at a well furnished table; who cannot understand people to be poor, because they have money in their pockets, and who, from their well-protected house, would see the whole of mankind robbed, pillaged, slaughtered, and even murdered, without being moved in the least. Molière was wrong in having sketched the Misanthrope as a man who gets angry about trifles; Alceste knows mankind, and ought therefore not to be astonished or enraged at anything they can do, neither at the treachery of a perfidious coquette, nor at the neglect of false friends; hence Molière has not well understood the character of the Misanthrope, and has made him ridiculous in order to please the public."

Fénelon, in his *Lettre sur l'Éloquence*, also attacks Molière, because he says he "has a . . . fault, which many clever people forgive in him, but which I do not, namely, that he has made vice graceful, and virtue severely ridiculous and odious. I can understand that his champions will bring forward that he has treated real honesty in an honorable manner, that

he has only attacked splenetic virtue and detestable hypocrisy: but, without entering into any long discussions, I maintain that Plato, and the other legislators of Pagan antiquity, would never have admitted in their republics such a play about morals."

Augustus William Schlegel, in his *Course of Lectures* (XXI.) *on Dramatic Art and Literature*, says: "In *The Misanthrope* . . . . the action, which is also poorly invented, is found to drag heavily; for, with the exception of a few scenes of a more sprightly description, it consists altogether of discourses formally introduced and supported, while the stagnation is only partially concealed by the art employed on the details of versification and expression. In a word, these pieces are too didactic, too expressly instructive; whereas, in comedy, the spectator should only be instructed incidentally, and, as it were, without its appearing to have been intended . . . . As is well known *The Misanthrope* was at first very coldly received, because it was even less amusing than *The School for Wives* and *The Blue-Stockings*, the action is less rapid, or rather there is none at all; and there is a great want of coherence between the meagre incidents which give only an apparent life to the dramatic movement,—the quarrel with Oronte respecting the sonnet, and its adjustment; the decision of the law-suit, which is ever being brought forward; the unmasking of Célimène, through the vanity of the two marquises, and the jealousy of Arsinoé. Besides all this, the general plot is not even probable. It is framed with a view to exhibit the thorough delineation of a character; but a character discloses itself much more in its relations with others than immediately. How comes Alceste to have chosen Philinte for a friend, a man whose principles were directly the reverse of his own? How comes he also to be enamored of a coquette, who has nothing amiable in her character, and who entertains us merely by her scandal? We might well say of this Célimène, without exaggeration, that there is not one good point in her whole composition. In a character like that of Alceste, love is not a fleeting sensual impulse, but a serious feeling arising from a want of a sincere mental union. His dislike of flattery, falsehood, and malicious scandal, which always characterize the conversation of Célimène, breaks forth so incessantly, that we feel the first moment he heard her open her lips, ought to have driven him forever from her society. Finally the subject is ambiguous, and that is its greatest fault. The limits within which Alceste is in the right, and beyond which he is in the wrong, it would be no easy matter to fix, and I am afraid the poet himself did not here see very clearly what he would be at. Philinte, however, with his illusory justification of the way of the world and his phlegmatic resignation, he paints throughout as the intelligent and amiable man. As against the elegant Célimène, Alceste is most decidedly in the right, and only in the wrong in the inconceivable weakness of his conduct towards her. He is in the right in his complaints of the corruption of the social constitution; the facts, at least, which he adduces, are disputed by nobody. He is in the wrong, however, in delivering his sentiments with so much violence, and at an unseasonable time; but as he cannot prevail upon himself to assume the dissimulation which is necessary to be well received in the world, he is perfectly in the right in preferring solitude to society."

The defenders of Molière's views are numerous. We shall take the oldest of his champions, viz.: Donneau de Visé, a former enemy, who had attacked *The School for Wives* in

his *Zélinde*, but who had seen his mistake, most probably because a play of his, *La Mère Coquette*, had been performed on the 5th of October of the year before, at the theatre of the Palais-Royal. He wrote a letter in defense of the piece, which was printed with the original edition, and has always since been published with it. He therein says, "Before we go to the foundation of the comedy, it is proper to see what was the author's aim." "That the author's design being to please, and the comedy having pleased, the critics cannot say he has done ill. . . . It was not his intention to write a comedy full of incidents, but only a play wherein he might speak against the manners of the age;" hence he chose a Misanthrope for his hero, whose "infirmity sets off his friend's (Philinte) wisdom." He further says, that the choice of Célimène, a woman given to slander, and of a man who hates mankind, as mouthpieces for railing at the manners of the age, is very ingenious; for what the hero may forget the coquette will add; praises the skillful opening of the piece, the scene between Oronte and Alceste, and adds, "the sonnet is not bad according to the manner of writing nowadays; and those who love what we men call points or conclusions, rather than good sense, will certainly like it. Nay, I saw some, at the first representation of this piece, who exposed their own character to the ridicule of this scene whilst it was being acted, for they cried out that the sonnet was good, until the Misanthrope had criticised it, and then they were all confounded." De Visé praises also the way in which Molière delineates the power of love, as seen in Alceste; speaks highly of the scene between Célimène and Arsinoé, and the "vigor with which the character of the hero is maintained," without being made ridiculous; considers that the part of Philinte is reasonable, and that every one ought to imitate him, and finishes thus: "In this comedy backbiting coquettes, after the example of Célimène, seeing that they cannot avoid encounters that will make them contemptible, ought to learn not to rail at their best friends behind their backs. False prudes ought to learn, that their grimaces are of no use: and that though they were indeed as sage as they would be thought, they would nevertheless be blamed so long as they set up for prudes. I say nothing of the marquises; I think them the most incorrigible of all; and there are so many things in them still to be found fault with, that everybody owns they may yet for a long time afford matter for ridicule, though they themselves are far from allowing this to be true.

Voltaire, though calling *The Misanthrope* Molière's masterpiece, pretends that the intrigue hangs fire now and then; that the conversation is sparkling, but not always necessary to the action; and finally, that the ending, though well managed, leaves the spectator indifferent, for he does not care whether the Misanthrope marries the coquette or not.

Chamfort, in the *Eloge de Molière*, says: "If ever any comic author has proved that he understood the system of society, it is Molière in *The Misanthrope*. There, whilst showing its abuses, he teaches at what cost a wise man should obtain the advantages which it grants; that, in a system of union based upon mutual indulgence, perfect virtue is out of place amongst men, and torments itself without correcting them. It is a gold which needs alloy to become firm and be of much use to society; but, at the same time, the author shows, by the constant superiority of Alceste over all the other personages, that virtue, in spite of the

ridicule caused by his austerity, eclipses all that surrounds it; and that, though gold has been alloyed, it is yet the costliest of metals."

La Harpe, in his *Cours de Littérature*,—a work formerly too much lauded, and at present too much neglected,—defends Molière against Rousseau; says that the dramatist does not ridicule Alceste's honesty and sincerity, but the excess of those qualities, and that every exaggeration belongs to the domain of comedy; that whenever Alceste attacks slander, nobody feels inclined to laugh, but that when he states that he should like to lose his lawsuit, for the fun of the thing, everybody laughs at him, and justly so. Sincerity is a good thing, but it does not give a man the right to become ridiculous with impunity; hence Molière has done rightly in even attempting to teach honesty not to exceed the ordinary limits of moderation. Rousseau himself admits that "people feel at the bottom of their heart a certain respect" for Alceste, though he professes faults, at which they justly laugh. The accusation that Molière has not understood the character of a Misanthrope, because the latter does not always rage against public vices, and feels the sting of personal offenses, is unjust, because man remains always a man. The accusation that Molière sacrificed everything to the necessity of making the pit laugh is unjust, because he attacked only what was laughable, and, like Horace, said the truth whilst laughing. As to Rousseau's hard words against Philinte, whom he calls "a scoundrel," "a gentle and even-tempered optimist," he appears to forget that scoundrels are never optimists, but pessimists, plausibly assuming that the world could not be worse, and seemingly so much the more severe in morals and honesty as they never attempt to bring them into practice.

Nisard, a well-known modern French literary critic, defends *The Misanthrope*, and states that this play cannot be analyzed nor reproduced with any chance of success; that the action takes place in the drawing-room of a heartless coquette of fashion, who has many gallants. Only one of them, Alceste, really loves her. He is not wrong in despising men, but wrong in stating his feelings openly, when he discovers at last that he is betrayed. This is the whole plot of the piece, and the situations are just as commonplace, even if they do exist. The characters unfold themselves. Alceste has a lawsuit, but he will not go and visit his judge; he has a duel, because he does not wish to abandon his reputation as an *honnête homme;* Célimène is a flirt and triumphs over the prude Arsinoé, but is punished by Alceste. And this is the peculiarity of *The Misanthrope*. Every one is punished by his or her own vices or faults; and even Alceste, though he is too honest to deserve marrying a coquette, is in perpetual opposition during the whole play, receives a great shock at the end, and all this, because, although an honest man, he thinks he is the only honest man in the world.

It has often been said that posterity is represented by foreigners: let us listen for a few minutes to English, German, and Swiss critics on this play.

William Hazlitt says, in his *Lectures on Wit and Humor*—"With respect to his two most labored comedies, the 'Tartuffe' and 'Misanthrope,' I confess I find them rather hard to get through. They have much of the improbability and extravagance of the others, united with the endless commonplace prosing of French declamation. What can exceed, for example, the absurdity of the Misanthrope, who leaves his mistress after every proof of her attachment

and constancy, for no other reason than that she will not submit to the *technical formality* of going to live with him in a wilderness? The characters, again, which Célimène gives of her female friends, near the opening of the play, are admirable satires (as good as Pope's characters of women), but not exactly in the spirit of comic dialogue."

Prescott, in his *Biographical and Critical Miscellanies*, has a very good Essay on Molière, in which he says: "We are now arrived at that period of Molière's career when he composed his '*Misanthrope*,' a play which some critics have esteemed his masterpiece, and which all concur in admiring as one of the noblest productions of the modern drama. Its literary execution, too, of paramount importance in the eye of a French critic, is more nicely elaborated than any other of the pieces of Molière, if we except the *Tartuffe*, and its didactic dialogue displays a maturity of thought equal to what is to be found in the best satires of Boileau. It is the very didactic tone of this comedy, indeed, which, combined with its want of eager, animating interest, made it less popular on its representation than some of his inferior pieces." With regard to Molière's sketching himself and his wife in the roles of Alceste and Célimène, Prescott comments thus upon it: "The respective parts which they performed in this piece, correspond precisely with their respective situations; that of Célimène, a fascinating, capricious coquette, insensible to every remonstrance, and selfishly bent on the gratification of her own appetites; and that of Alceste, perfectly sensible of the duplicity of his mistress, whom he vainly hopes to reform, and no less so of the unworthiness of his own passion, from which he as vainly hopes to extricate himself. The coincidences are too exact to be wholly accidental."

John Sterling, in his critical essay on "*Characteristics of German Genius*," says: "The genius of Molière rose above the pitch of his contemporaries, and in spite of seeming destiny, made him a great original painter of life, and a worthy companion of Montaigne and Rabelais, who had preluded, somewhat as Chaucer among us, to the glories of a later age. His *Misanthrope* is more truly Shakespearian, more simply, deeply drawn from the realities of the human soul, than anything we have seen of the professedly Shakespearian school now shedding blood by pailfuls on the Parisian stage. This play, in fact, anticipates Rousseau, and stands in a very singular relation between *Hamlet* and *Faust;* and in like manner *Tartuffe* strikes the key-note of much that distinguishes Voltaire."

A Swiss literary critic, M. E. Rambert, in his work *Corneille, Racine et Molière*, writes that, in poets of the second order, speech kills the action: in Molière, on the contrary, it serves and vivifies it; that it is true that there is in *The Misanthrope* a moral question, but this always happens in lofty dramatic poetry; that no one can analyze a fictitious or real character, without stumbling upon some philosophic or moral problem, which ought to arise from the character of the hero. He further affirms that Philinte is not created only to give a reply, but that he is the model of a true friend, who bears all Alceste's whims and rebuffs. He also prefers Alceste to Tartuffe, because the first is one of those who possess all the attributes of humanity; says Alceste is superior to Shakespeare's Timon—whom he calls "a Job on his dunghill, but a Job full of hatred and bile"—because Alceste's hatred is akin to love, Timon's only humiliation and thirst for vengeance; believes that *The Misanthrope* produces

in us a poetical impression, and contains not a satire, but a lesson, which leaves us in thought, but not haunted, as it were, by one idea, which becomes fatiguing. M. Rambert ends by stating, that, after the troubles of the Fronde, society had become philosophical, and liked to speculate on abstruse questions of morality; hence the appearance of La Rochefoucauld's *Maxims*—of which the first edition was published in 1665—and hence the Misanthrope, who gets angry at the wickedness of men, whilst the noble moralist judges them, despises them, but remains cool all the time.

Goethe, in his *Conversations with Eckermann* (1825), says: "Molière is so great, that one is astonished anew every time one reads him. He is a man by himself—his pieces border on tragedy; they are apprehensive, and no one has the courage to imitate them." And in 1827, the great German says: "*The Misanthrope*, which I read over and over again, as one of my most favorite pieces, is repugnant to him (Schlegel)." "It is not to be denied," continues he, "that Schlegel knows a great deal, and one is almost terrified at his extraordinary attainments and his extensive reading. But this is not enough. All the learning in the world is still no judgment. His criticism is completely one-sided, because in all theatrical pieces he merely regards the skeleton of the plot and arrangement, and only points out small points of resemblance to great predecessors, without troubling himself in the least as to what the author brings forward of graceful life and the culture of a high soul. But of what use are all the arts of a talent if we do not find in a theatrical piece an amiable or a great personality of the author. This alone influences the cultivation of the people."

Paul Lindau, a living German critic of some celebrity, and who has written a *Life of Molière*, says, that "when our author wrote this play, he was forty-four years old; his friend Racine had betrayed him; his patroness, the Queen-Mother was dead; his enemies at court had prevented the representation of the *Tartuffe;* his youthful wife gave him reason to be jealous; he had been ill for two months; and yet, in spite of all that, he wrote *The Misanthrope.*" In this play, he attacks the court, its hollowness, its empty glitter and heads; for in spite of his admiration for Louis XIV., Molière did not spare the courtiers. Amidst the splendor of Versailles, its triumphant pæans, its sparkling fountains, shaded walks and rustling trees, where puppets, in velvet and silk, jump about and dance and sing, and think not of the morrow, our Moralist appears and asks himself—How are all these enjoyments obtained? And the answer is: "By lies and hypocrisy." The philosopher looks underneath the masks and the paint, and beholds the spectre of misery. He warns men to become sincere, honest, and true, for the earth trembles under their feet, the foundations of society are undermined by the worm of falsehood, thunder rolls in the distance and will break out a hundred years later. Alceste is the precursor of a threatening social revolution; these feelings have unconsciously moved him to speak; hence his dislike and hatred for lies and liars, and "as all men are liars," the cause of his being a Misanthrope.

In the preface to this translation I have stated that Philinte "portrays quite common sense, amiability, intelligence, instruction, knowledge of the world, and a spirit of refined criticism." He possesses rather too much of all these qualities, which thus become faults. I imagine that Molière clearly indicates that Philinte has a far greater contempt for men than

Alceste. The latter is very loud in all his denunciations against wickedness; his passion for sincerity often carries him to ridiculous extremes, but amidst all his vaporing, we feel that he is angry with rampant falsehood and deceit, but not that he hates his fellow-creatures: in fact, his very rage proves the contrary. Philinte has over much "quiet common sense;" he "treats the man of worth and the fop alike;" he has too much "amiability," for he pays compliments to old Emilia, to Dorilas, to Oronte about his sonnet; he shows his "spirit of refined criticism" by stating that "whatever he may discover, at any moment, people do not see him in a rage . . . that he takes men quietly just as they are;" "that his mind is not more shocked at seeing a man a rogue, unjust, or selfish, than at seeing vultures eager for prey, mischievous apes, or fury-lashed wolves." When he hears Alceste thundering against Célimène, Acaste and Clitandre slandering their acquaintances, he proves his "knowledge of the world" by coolly asking his friend why he takes such a great interest in those people. He never blames nor admires anything, except with some feeble adjectives. When Eliante states that she esteems Alceste, he only expresses his astonishment at seeing him in love. When his friend's heart is torn by jealousy, he can say nothing warmer than that "a letter may sometimes deceive by appearances, and not be as guilty as you think." His "intelligence" is as characteristic as all his other qualities; he first tells his friend that the sincere Eliante has some inclination for him, and then, when Eliante informs Philinte that she might be induced to receive Alceste's addresses, he coolly informs her that in case his friend does not answer her love, he would only be too happy to have her affection transferred to himself. When in the last scene Eliante offers him her hand, he seems to get excited, and exclaims that he "could sacrifice my (his) life and soul for it;" but the lukewarmness he has displayed in his courtship, during the whole play, proves his excitement to be abnormal. It is true that he bears with the rebuffs of Alceste, but this is not out of friendship, but simply because he is too amiable; hence it would be too much trouble to argue. He has no warm blood coursing through his veins. I said just now that Philinte had a far greater contempt for men than Alceste. I do not mean that he shows this contempt openly. But the man to whom good or evil is theoretically alike, to whom all men are the same, and who is the same to all men, is the greatest Misanthrope that ever existed, for he is above or below humanity. It is not necessary that Philinte should have acted up to his principles; his very contempt for men forbids such a thing as action. What would be the good of it? His feebly beating heart cannot contain such a feeling as healthy hatred or even love. I imagine that he must have uttered his speeches with an affected drawl, as painful for him to produce as for his audience to listen to. He is the real prototype of the *nil admirari* school; he is no "scoundrel," as Rousseau says, for he has no passions, good or evil; he does not play the fool, for it requires not an intelligent, but a wise man, to play the fool; he is the chief of the *pococuranti*, who pursue the even tenor of their ways, without being moved or stirred by anything, who are too critically refined ever to do an evil deed or to admire a noble action; the worthy ancestor of those *petits crevés*, who strut languidly through life with their dainty dress and manners, with their eternal grin, their want of heart and patriotism, and their never varying answer, *pas si bête*.

In the third volume of the Select Comedies of M. de Molière, London, 1732, *The Misanthrope* is dedicated to the Duke of Montagu, under the name of *The Man-Hater*, in the following words:

The *Misanthrope* of MOLIÈRE in *French* and *English*, assumes the honor of appearing in the World under your GRACE's Patronage. The Translator doubts not but Your GRACE will be the first to forgive what has the Face of monstrous Impropriety, his dedicating the *Man-Hater* to the most humane Man in *England*.

Your GRACE very well knows that this Play has always bore the Character, amongst Men of Taste and Judgment, of being the most finished Piece of this Author, in which are united the utmost Efforts of Genius and Art.

The Subject, MY LORD, is single, and the Unities exactly observ'd. The principal Character is strong, and distinguish'd with the boldest Strokes of a masterly Pencil; 'tis well preserv'd, and throughout entirely uniform. The under Characters are equally well drawn, and admirably chose to cast each their proper Degree of Light upon the Chief Figure: The Scenes and Incidents are so contriv'd and conducted as to diversify the main Character, and set it in all the different Points of Light one can wish to see it in. The Sentiments are not only proper, but strong and nervous, and the whole Piece so fraught with good Sense, that 'twere hard to find an indifferent Line in it. So just is the Observation of *Rapin*, that the *Misanthrope* is the most finish'd, and withal the most singular Character that ever appear'd on the Stage.

Not but that the Title of *Man-Hater*, MY LORD, has been famous in the World for many Centuries, and is as well known as the Name of *Timon of Athens;* without any Impeachment of what the *French* Critic has said of the singularity of our *Misanthrope;* for the Character of the ancient *Man-Hater* had little uncommon in it, it took its Rise merely from personal Ill-usage and Disappointment, and was no more Strange than that one who suffers by Excess of Good-nature and Credulity, shou'd run into the other Extreme of being excessively revengeful and suspicious.

Whereas MOLIÈRE'S *Man-Hater* owes his Character to an over-rigid Virtue, which cou'd give no Quarter to the Vices of Mankind; to a Sincerity, particularly, which disdain'd that undistinguishing Complaisance, those surfeiting expressions of Kindness to all in common, which leave Men no Language to express Approbation and Friendship to the wise and virtuous, but what is prostituted to flatter Fools and Knaves: so that *Alcestes* hates men not to injure, but to avoid them.

It must at the same time be confess'd, MY LORD, that MOLIÈRE drew not this Character for Imitation. Had he done so, he wou'd have made him only a good-natured, brave, and generous *Plain Dealer*, not a *Man-Hater;* as far from the Churlishness of *Alcestes* as from the Over-civility of *Philintes*. He wou'd have drawn him severe, but not Cynical; an Enemy to Men's Vices but not to their Persons; inflexibly virtuous, but not ill-natur'd; reserved, yet not unsociable; sincere with good Manners. In short, he wou'd have made him a MONTAGU. The character had then been unexceptionable—I am, *My* LORD, *Your* GRACE'S *most Faithful, most Obedient Humble Servant,* THE TRANSLATOR.

An author of the end of last century, Fabre d'Églantine, who devoted his time partly to politics and partly to literature, wrote a play, *The Philinte of Molière*, in which he made of Philinte an odious and miserable egotist, and of Alceste an exaggerated philanthropist. Geoffroy, a celebrated French critic, said that *The Philinte* compared to *The Misanthrope*, was like anarchy in comparison with a good government. Several other Misanthropes have been attempted on the French stage. Brécourt (see Introduction to *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Vol. I.), wrote a comedy in one act, called *Timon*, first performed on August 12, 1684; and Delisle wrote a three-act play, called *Timon the Misanthrope*, first brought out on January 2,

1782, in which an ass is changed into harlequin, and gives lessons of kindness and wisdom to his former master, Timon.

In English, part of *The Misanthrope* has been borrowed by Wycherley for *The Plain Dealer*, of which Manley and Olivia are decided imitations of Alceste and Célimène, and in which one scene is imitated from *The School for Wives criticised* (see Introductory Notice to *The School for Wives criticised*, Vol. I.). Baker, in his "Biographia Dramatica," most amusingly says: "*The Misanthrope* (of Molière), and other things, seem to have been in Wycherley's mind when he traced his characters; but when subjects are so well handled, it is but mean caviling to say so much about it, and in revenge, if he had recourse to French writers, English writers have had recourse to him." M. Taine has another opinion of Wycherley and his play, and I entirely agree with him. He says in the *History of English Literature*: "If he (Wycherley) translates the part of Molière, he wipes out at one stroke the manners of a great lady, the woman's delicacy, the tact of the lady of the house, the politeness, the refined air, the superiority of wit and knowledge of the world, in order to substitute for them the impudence and deceit of a foul-mouthed courtesan . . . A certain gift hovers over all—namely, vigor . . . He is a realist, not on set purpose, as the realist of our day, but naturally . . . Our modern nerves could not endure the portrait Olivia draws of Manley . . . The woman's independence is like a professed courtesan's . . . Manley is copied after Alceste . . . and is not a courtier but a ship-captain, with the bearing of the sailor of the time, his cloak stained with tar, and smelling of brandy, ready with blows or foul oaths, calling those he came across dogs and slaves, and when they displeased him, kicking them down stairs . . . Wycherley took to himself in his dedication the title of his hero, *Plain Dealer*; he fancied he had drawn the portrait of a frank, honest man . . . he had only given . . . the model of an unreserved and energetic brute."

Sir Walter Scott, in his *Essay on the Drama*, says: "*The Plain Dealer* is, indeed, imitated from Molière; but the principal character has more the force of a real portrait, and is better contrasted with the perverse bustling, masculine, pettifogging, and litigious character of Widow Blackacre, than Alceste is with any character of *The Misanthrope*."

The late Lord Macaulay, in his *Essay on the Comic Dramatists of the Restoration*, uses the following words about Wycherley's *Plain Dealer*: "Molière exhibited in his *Misanthrope* a pure and noble mind, which had been sorely vexed by the sight of perfidy and malevolence, disguised under forms of politeness. As every extreme naturally generates its contrary, Alceste adopts a standard of good and evil directly opposed to that of the society which surrounds him. Courtesy, seems to him a vice; and those stern virtues which are neglected by the fops and coquettes of Paris become too exclusively the objects of his veneration. He is often to blame; he is often ridiculous; but he is always a good man; and the feeling which he inspires is regret that a person so estimable should be so unamiable. Wycherley borrowed Alceste, and turned him—we quote the words of so lenient a critic as Mr. Leigh Hunt—into 'a ferocious sensualist, who believed himself as great a rascal as he thought everybody else.' The surliness of Molière's hero is copied and caricatured. But the most nauseous libertinism and the most dastardly fraud are substituted for the purity and integrity of the original. And, to make

the whole complete, Wycherley does not seem to have been aware that he was not drawing the portrait of an eminently honest man. So depraved was his moral taste, that, while he firmly believed he was producing a picture of virtue too exalted for the commerce of the world, he was really delineating the greatest rascal to be found, even in his own writings."

Voltaire has imitated *The Plain Dealer* in a five-act comedy in verse, called *La Prude*, and represented for the first time in the private theatre of the Duchess of Maine, at Anet. It is one of the funniest, and, for the student, one of the most interesting imitations I have ever read; and the attempt of Voltaire to hide the coarseness of Manley and Olivia under an elegant French dress, and to make them fit to be represented before the rather finical, although witty, company at Anet, is highly entertaining. This is the moral of the piece after Dorfise (Olivia) is found out: "*Cela Pourra d'abord faire jaser; mais tout s'appaise, et tout doit s'appaiser.*"

Sheridan has also borrowed some scenes from *The Misanthrope* for *The School for Scandal*, a comedy of which M. Taine, in his work already mentioned, says: "Sheridan took two characters from Fielding, Blifil and Tom Jones; two plays of Molière, *Le Misanthrope* and *Tartuffe;* and from these puissant materials, condensed with admirable cleverness, he has constructed the most brilliant firework imaginable. Molière has only one female slanderer, Célimène; the other characters serve only to give her a cue; there is quite enough of such a jeering woman; she rails on within certain bounds, without hurry, like a true queen of the drawing-room, who has time to converse, who knows that she is listened to, who listens to herself; she is a woman of society, who preserves the tone of refined conversation; and in order to smooth down the harshness, her slanders are interrupted by the calm reason and sensible discourse of the amiable Eliante. Molière represents the malice of the world without exaggeration; but in Sheridan they are rather caricatured than depicted.

The sixth scene of the second act of Congreve's *The Way of the World*, performed at the theatre, Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, in 1700, has also been partly inspired by the fifth scene of the second act of Molière's play. Congreve seems to have liked Molière's *Misanthrope*, for he imitated the same scenes of the same play in *Love for Love* (Act I., Scenes 9-15). (See Introductory Notice to *Don Juan.*) The characters there, called Valentine, Scandal, Tattle, and Mrs. Frail, are certainly not copied, but based upon those of Molière.

Th. Shadwell, in *The Sullen Lovers* (see Introductory Notice to *The Bores*), has likewise imitated the first scene of the first act of *The Misanthrope.*

In Baker's *Biographia Dramatica*, it is stated that a certain Mr. John Huges translated *The Misanthrope* from Voltaire—Molière is evidently meant; and that this translation . . . "was afterwards reprinted with Molière's other plays translated by Ozell, without any notice by whom it was Englished."

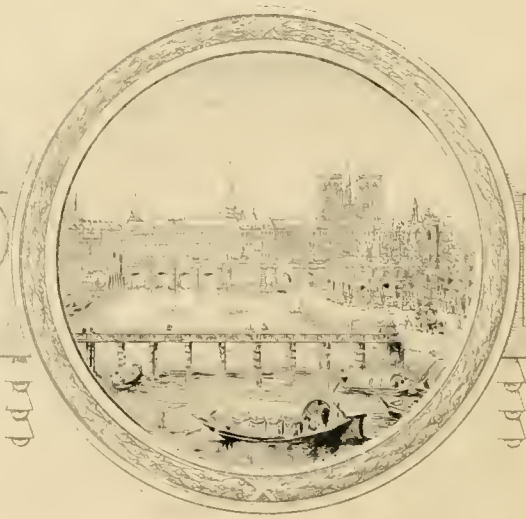
NOTE

[1] M. E. Despois, in his very accurate book, *Le Théatre francaise sous Louis* XIV., states that *The Misanthrope* was neither a great success, nor a complete failure. At its first representation, 1447 livres, 10 sous were received—a considerable "take" for that time; but from the third representation, the receipts went down to between 600 and 700 livres; the tenth brought only 212 livres. It is therefore more than probable that, if this comedy had not been Molière's, and played in his own theatre, it would have been withdrawn. The twenty-first representation was on a Sunday, when there was generally a good deal of money taken at the door, and brought only 268 livres.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ALCESTE, In love with Célimène.[1]
PHILINTE, His friend.
ORONTE, In love with Célimène.
CELIMENE, Beloved by Alceste.
ELIANTE, Her cousin.
ARSINOE, Célimène's friend.
ACASTE, CLITANDRE, } Marquises.
BASQUE, Servant to Célimène.
DUBOIS, Servant to Alceste.
AN OFFICER OF THE MARECHAUSSEE.[2]

SCENE—*At Paris, in Célimène's house.*



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—[illegible] ALCESTE.

PHIL. What is the matter? What ails you?

ALC. (*Seated*) [illegible] I pray.

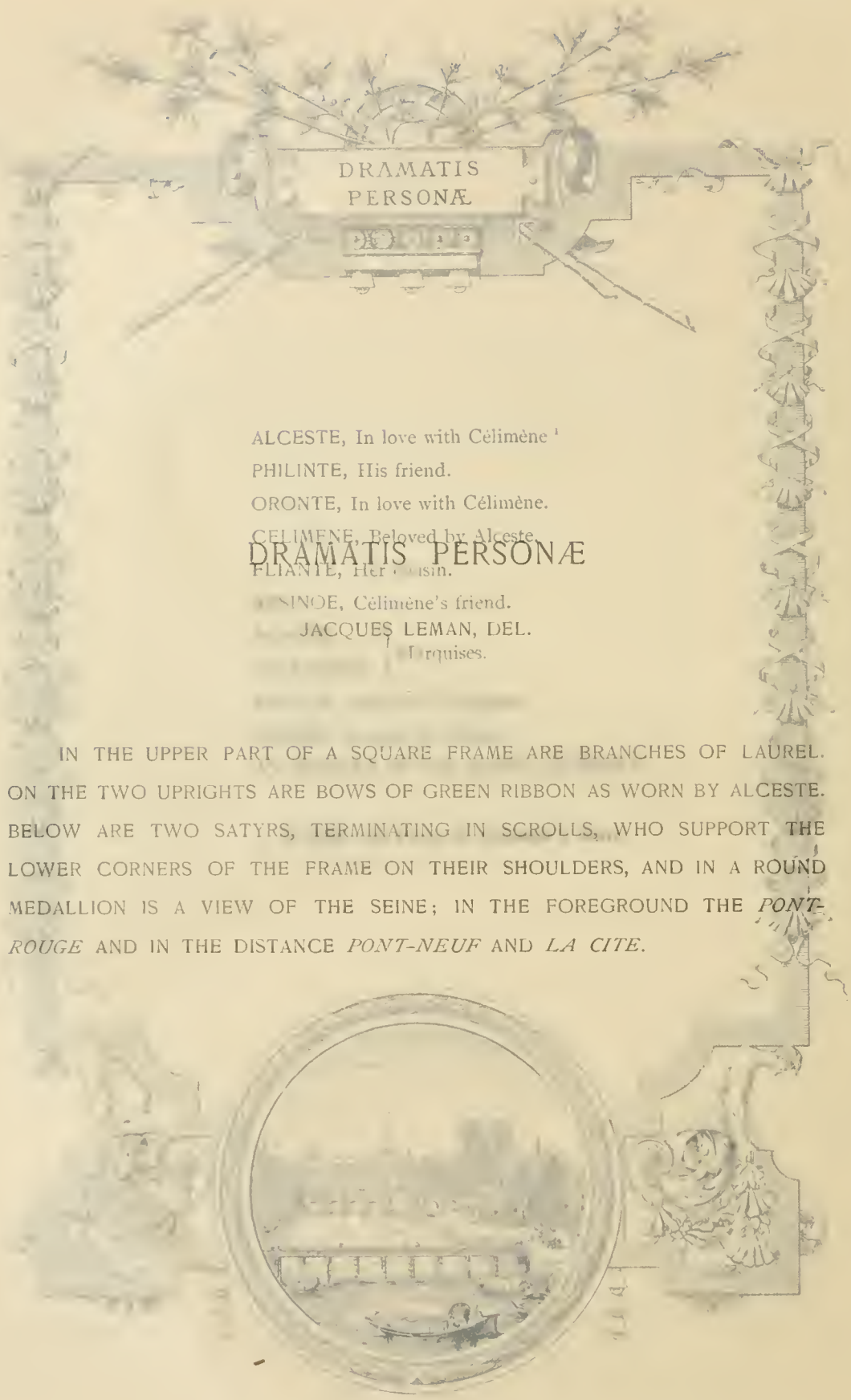
PHIL. But, [illegible] what strange whim

ALC. [illegible] out of my sight.

PHIL. [illegible]

ALC. [illegible] I do not choose to listen.

PHIL. I do not understand you ill-[illegible] words, and although we are friends I am the last . . .



IN THE UPPER PART OF A SQUARE FRAME ARE BRANCHES OF LAUREL. ON THE TWO UPRIGHTS ARE BOWS OF GREEN RIBBON AS WORN BY ALCESTE. BELOW ARE TWO SATYRS, TERMINATING IN SCROLLS, WHO SUPPORT THE LOWER CORNERS OF THE FRAME ON THEIR SHOULDERS, AND IN A ROUND MEDALLION IS A VIEW OF THE SEINE; IN THE FOREGROUND THE *PONT-ROUGE* AND IN THE DISTANCE *PONT-NEUF* AND *LA CITE*.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—PHILINTE, ALCESTE.

PHIL. What is the matter? What ails you?

ALC. (*Seated.*) Leave me, I pray.

PHIL. But, once more, tell me what strange whim . . .

ALC. Leave me, I tell you, and get out of my sight.

PHIL. But you might at least listen to people, without getting angry.

ALC. I choose to get angry, and I do not choose to listen.

PHIL. I do not understand you in these abrupt moods, and although we are friends, I am the first . . .

ALC. (*Rising quickly.*) I, your friend? Lay not that flattering unction to your soul. I have until now professed to be so; but after what I have just seen of you, I tell you candidly that I am such no longer; I have no wish to occupy a place in a corrupt heart.

PHIL. I am then very much to be blamed from your point of view, Alceste?

ALC. To be blamed? You ought to die from very shame; there is no excuse for such behavior, and every man of honor must be disgusted at it. I see you almost stifle a man with caresses, show him the most ardent

affection, and overwhelm him with protestations, offers, and vows of friendship. Your ebullitions of tenderness know no bounds; and when I ask you who that man is, you can scarcely tell me his name; your feelings for him, the moment you have turned your back, suddenly cool; you speak of him most indifferently to me. Zounds! I call it unworthy, base, and infamous, so far to demean one's self as to act contrary to one's own feelings, and if, unfortunately, I had done such a thing, I should go that very instant, and hang myself out of sheer vexation.

PHIL. I do not see that it is a hanging matter at all; and I beg of you not to think it amiss if I ask you to show me some mercy, for I shall not hang myself, if it be all the same to you.

ALC. That is a sorry joke.

PHIL. But, seriously, what would you have people do?

ALC. I would have people be sincere, and that, like men of honor, no word be spoken that comes not from the heart.

PHIL. When a man comes and embraces you warmly, you must pay him back in his own coin, respond as best you can to his show of feeling, and return offer for offer, and vow for vow.

ALC. Not so. I cannot bear so base a method, which your fashionable people generally affect; there is nothing I detest so much as the contortions of these great time-and-lip servers, these affable dispensers of meaningless embraces, these obliging utterers of empty words, who vie with every one in civilities, and treat the man of worth and the fop alike. What good does it do if a man heaps endearments on you, vows that he is your friend, that he believes in you, is full of zeal for you, esteems and loves you, and lauds you to the skies, when he rushes to do the same to the first rapscallion he meets? No, no, no heart with the least self-respect cares for esteem so prostituted; he will hardly relish it, even when openly expressed, when he finds that he shares it with the whole universe. Preference must be based on esteem, and to esteem every one is to esteem no one. As you abandon yourself to the vices of the times, zounds! you are not the man for me. I decline this over-complaisant kindness, which uses no discrimination. I like to be distinguished; and, to cut the matter short, the friend of all mankind is no friend of mine.

PHIL. But when we are of the world, we must conform to the outward civilities which custom demands.

ALC. I deny it. We ought to punish pitilessly that shameful pretense of friendly intercourse. I like a man to be a man, and to show on all occasions the bottom of his heart in his discourse. Let that be the thing to speak, and never let our feelings be hidden beneath vain compliments.

PHIL. There are many cases in which plain speaking would become ridiculous, and could hardly be tolerated. And, with all due allowance for your unbending honesty, it is as well to conceal your feelings sometimes. Would it be right or decent to tell thousands of people what we think of them? And when we meet with some one whom we hate or who displeases us, must we tell him so openly?

ALC. Yes.

PHIL. What! Would you tell old Emilia, that it ill becomes her to set up for a beauty at her age, and that the paint she uses disgusts everyone?

ALC. Undoubtedly.

PHIL. Or Dorilas, that he is a bore, and that there is no one at court who is not sick

of hearing him boast of his courage, and the lustre of his house?

ALC. Decidedly so.

PHIL. You are jesting.

ALC. I am not jesting at all; and I would not spare anyone in that respect. It offends my eyes too much; and whether at court or in town, I behold nothing but what provokes my spleen. I become quite melancholy and deeply grieved to see men behave to each other as they do. Everywhere I find nothing but base flattery, injustice, self-interest, deceit, roguery. I cannot bear it any longer; I am furious; and my intention is to break with all mankind.

PHIL. This philosophical spleen is somewhat too savage. I cannot but laugh to see you in these gloomy fits, and fancy that I perceive in us two, brought up together, the two brothers described in *The School for Husbands*, who . . .

ALC. Good heavens! drop your insipid comparisons.

PHIL. Nay, seriously, leave off these vagaries. The world will not alter for all your meddling. And as plain speaking has such charms for you, I shall tell you frankly that this complaint of yours is as good as a play, wherever you go, and that all those invectives against the manners of the age, make you a laughing-stock to many people.

ALC. So much the better, zounds! so much the better. That is just what I want. It is a very good sign, and I rejoice at it. All men are so odious to me, that I should be sorry to appear rational in their eyes.

PHIL. But do you wish harm to all mankind?

ALC. Yes; I have conceived a terrible hatred for them.

PHIL. Shall all poor mortals, without exception, be included in this aversion? There are some, even in the age in which we live . . .

ALC. No, they are all alike; and I hate all men: some, because they are wicked and mischievous; others because they lend themselves to the wicked, and have not that healthy contempt with which vice ought to inspire all virtuous minds. You can see how unjustly and excessively complacent people are to that bare-faced scoundrel with whom I am at law. You may plainly perceive the traitor through his mask; he is well known everywhere in his true colors; his rolling eyes and his honeyed tones impose only on those who do not know him. People are aware that this low-bred fellow, who deserves to be pilloried, has, by the dirtiest jobs, made his way in the world; and that the splendid position he has acquired makes merit repine and virtue blush. Yet whatever dishonorable epithets may be launched against him everywhere, nobody defends his wretched honor. Call him a rogue, an infamous wretch, a confounded scoundrel if you like, all the world will say "yea," and no one contradicts you. But for all that, his bowing and scraping are welcome everywhere; he is received, smiled upon, and wriggles himself into all kinds of society; and, if any appointment is to be secured by intriguing, he will carry the day over a man of the greatest worth. Zounds! these are mortal stabs to me, to see vice parleyed with; and sometimes I feel suddenly inclined to fly into a wilderness far from the approach of men.

PHIL. Great Heaven! let us torment ourselves a little less about the vices of our age, and be a little more lenient to human nature. Let us not scrutinize it with the utmost severity, but look with some indulgence at its failings. In society, we need virtue to be more

pliable. If we are too wise, we may be equally to blame. Good sense avoids all extremes, and requires us to be soberly rational.[3] This unbending and virtuous stiffness of ancient times shocks too much the ordinary customs of our own; it requires too great perfection from us mortals; we must yield to the times without being too stubborn; it is the height of folly to busy ourselves in correcting the world. I, as well as yourself, notice a hundred things every day which might be better managed, differently enacted; but whatever I may discover at any moment, people do not see me in a rage like you. I take men quietly just as they are; I accustom my mind to bear with what they do; and I believe that at court, as well as in the city, my phlegm is as philosophical as your bile.

ALC. But this phlegm, good sir, you who reason so well, could it not be disturbed by anything? And if perchance a friend should betray you; if he forms a subtle plot to get hold of what is yours; if people should try to spread evil reports about you, would you tamely submit to all this without flying into a rage?

PHIL. Ay, I look upon all these faults of which you complain as vices inseparably connected with human nature; in short, my mind is no more shocked at seeing a man a rogue, unjust, or selfish, than at seeing vultures, eager for prey, mischievous apes, or fury-lashed wolves.

ALC. What! I should see myself deceived, torn to pieces, robbed, without being . . . Zounds! I shall say no more about it; all this reasoning is full of impertinence!

PHIL. Upon my word, you would do well to keep silence. Rail a little less at your opponent, and attend a little more to your suit.

ALC. That I shall not do; that is settled long ago.

PHIL. But whom then do you expect to solicit for you?

ALC. Whom? Reason, my just right, equity.

PHIL. Shall you not pay a visit to any of the judges?

ALC. No. Is my cause unjust or dubious?

PHIL. I am agreed on that; but you know what harm intrigues do, and . . .

ALC. No. I am resolved not to stir a step. I am either right or wrong.

PHIL. Do not trust to that.

ALC. I shall not budge an inch.

PHIL. Your opponent is powerful, and by his underhand work, may induce . . .

ALC. It does not matter.

PHIL. You will make a mistake.

ALC. Be it so. I wish to see the end of it.

PHIL. But . . .

ALC. I shall have the satisfaction of losing my suit.

PHIL. But after all . . .

ALC. I shall see by this trial whether men have sufficient impudence, are wicked, villainous, and preverse enough to do me this injustice in the face of the whole world.

PHIL. What a strange fellow!

ALC. I could wish, were it to cost me ever so much, that, for the fun of the thing, I lost my case.

PHIL. But people will really laugh at you, Alceste, if they hear you go on in this fashion.

ALC. So much the worse for those who will.

PHIL. But this rectitude, which you exact so carefully in every case, this absolute integrity in which you intrench yourself, do you perceive it in the lady you love? As for me, I am astonished that, appearing to be at war with the whole human race, you yet, notwithstanding everything that can render it odious

to you, have found aught to charm your eyes. And what surprises me still more, is the strange choice your heart has made. The sincere Eliante has a liking for you, the prude Arsinoë looks with favor upon you, yet your heart does not respond to their passion; whilst you wear the chains of Célimène, who sports with you, and whose coquettish humor and malicious wit seems to accord so well with the manner of the times. How comes it that, hating these things as mortally as you do, you endure so much of them in that lady? Are they no longer faults in so sweet a charmer? Do not you perceive them, or if you do, do you excuse them?

ALC. Not so. The love I feel for this young widow does not make me blind to her faults, and, notwithstanding the great passion with which she has inspired me, I am the first to see, as well as to condemn, them. But for all this, do what I will, I confess my weakness, she has the art of pleasing me. In vain I see her faults; I may even blame them; in spite of all, she makes me love her. Her charms conquer everything, and, no doubt, my sincere love will purify our heart from the vices of our times.[4]

PHIL. If you accomplish this, it will be no small task. Do you believe yourself beloved by her?

ALC. Yes, certainly! I should not love her at all, did I not think so.

PHIL. But if her love for you is so apparent, how comes it that your rivals cause you so much uneasiness?

ALC. It is because a heart, deeply smitten, claims all to itself; I come here only with the intention of telling her what, on this subject, my feelings dictate.

PHIL. Had I but to choose, her cousin Eliante would have all my love. Her heart, which values yours, is stable and sincere; and this more compatible choice would have suited you better.

ALC. It is true; my good sense tells me so every day; but good sense does not always rule love.

PHIL. Well, I fear much for your affections; and the hope which you cherish may perhaps . . .

SCENE II. — ORONTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ORON. (*To Alceste.*) I have been informed yonder, that Eliante and Célimène have gone out to make some purchases. But as I heard that you were here, I came to tell you, most sincerely, that I have conceived the greatest regard for you, and that, for a long time, this regard has inspired me with the most ardent wish to be reckoned among our friends. Yes; I like to do homage to merit; and I am most anxious that a bond of friendship should unite us. I suppose that a zealous friend, and of my standing, is not altogether to be rejected. (*All this time Alceste has been musing, and seems not to be aware that Oronte is addressing him. He looks up only when Oronte says to him,*)—It is to you, if you please, that this speech is addressed.

ALC. To me, sir?

ORON. To you. Is it in any way offensive to you?

ALC. Not in the least. But my surprise is very great; and I did not expect that honor.

ORON. The regard in which I hold you ought not to astonish you, and you can claim it from the whole world.

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. Our whole kingdom contains nothing above the dazzling merit which people discover in you.

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. Yes; for my part, I prefer you to the most important in it.

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. May Heaven strike me dead, if I lie! And, to convince you, on this very spot, of my feelings, allow me, sir, to embrace you with all my heart, and to solicit a place in your friendship. Your hand, if you please. Will you promise me your friendship?

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. What! you refuse me?

ALC. Sir, you do me too much honor; but friendship is a sacred thing,[5] and to lavish it on every occasion is surely to profane it. Judgment and choice should preside at such a compact; we ought to know more of each other before engaging ourselves; and it may happen that our dispositions are such that we may both of us repent of our bargain.

ORON. Upon my word! that is wisely said; and I esteem you all the more for it. Let us therefore leave it to time to form such a pleasing bond; but, meanwhile I am entirely at your disposal. If you have any business at court, every one knows how well I stand with the king; I have his private ear; and, upon my word, he treats me in everything with the utmost intimacy. In short, I am yours in every emergency; and, as you are a man of brilliant parts, and to inaugurate our charming amity, I come to read you a sonnet which I made a little while ago, and to know whether it be good enough for publicity.

ALC. I am not fit, sir, to decide such a matter. You will therefore excuse me.

ORON. Why so?

ALC. I have the failing of being a little more sincere in those things than is necessary.

ORON. The very thing I ask; and I should have reason to complain, if, in laying myself open to you that you might give me your frank opinion, you should deceive me, and disguise anything from me.

ALC. If that be the case, sir, I am perfectly willing.

ORON. *Sonnet* . . . It is a sonnet . . . *Hope* . . . It is to a lady who flattered my passion with some hope. *Hope* . . . They are not long, pompous verses, but mild, tender and melting little lines.

(*At every one of these interruptions he looks at Alceste.*)

ALC. We shall see.

ORON. Hope . . . I do not know whether the style will strike you as sufficiently clear and easy, and whether you will approve of my choice of words.

ALC. We shall soon see, sir.

ORON. Besides, you must know that I was only a quarter of an hour in composing it.

ALC. Let us hear, sir; the time signifies nothing.

ORON. (Reads.)

> Hope, it is true, oft gives relief,
> Rocks for a while our tedious pain,
> But what a poor advantage, Phillis,
> When naught remains, and all is gone!

PHIL. I am already charmed with this little bit.

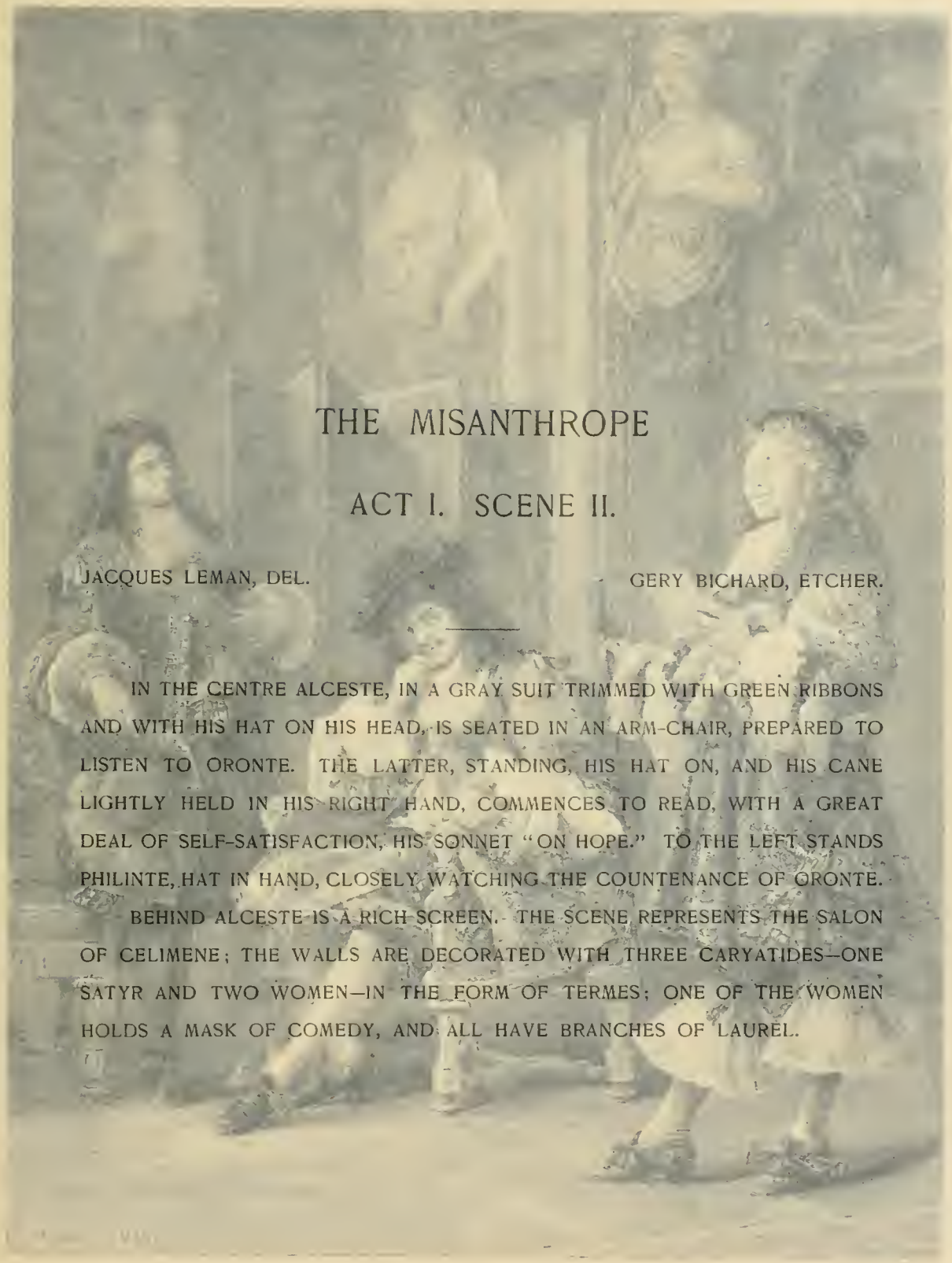
ALC. (*Softly to Philinte.*) What! do you mean to tell me that you like this stuff?

ORON.

> You once had some complacency,
> But less would have sufficed,
> You should not take that trouble
> To give me naught but hope.

PHIL. In what pretty terms these thoughts are put!

ALC. How now! you vile flatterer, you praise this rubbish!



THE MISANTHROPE

ACT I. SCENE II.

JACQUES LEMAN, DEL. GERY BICHARD, ETCHER.

IN THE CENTRE ALCESTE, IN A GRAY SUIT TRIMMED WITH GREEN RIBBONS AND WITH HIS HAT ON HIS HEAD, IS SEATED IN AN ARM-CHAIR, PREPARED TO LISTEN TO ORONTE. THE LATTER, STANDING, HIS HAT ON, AND HIS CANE LIGHTLY HELD IN HIS RIGHT HAND, COMMENCES TO READ, WITH A GREAT DEAL OF SELF-SATISFACTION, HIS SONNET "ON HOPE." TO THE LEFT STANDS PHILINTE, HAT IN HAND, CLOSELY WATCHING THE COUNTENANCE OF ORONTE.

BEHIND ALCESTE IS A RICH SCREEN. THE SCENE REPRESENTS THE SALON OF CELIMENE; THE WALLS ARE DECORATED WITH THREE CARYATIDES—ONE SATYR AND TWO WOMEN—IN THE FORM OF TERMES; ONE OF THE WOMEN HOLDS A MASK OF COMEDY, AND ALL HAVE BRANCHES OF LAUREL.

ALC. Sir [illegible]

ORON. Yes; for my part, I prefer you [illegible] most important in it.

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. May Heaven [illegible] dead, if I lie! And, to convince [illegible] this very spot, of my feelings, allow [illegible], to embrace you with all my heart [illegible] to solicit a place in your friendship [illegible] hand, if you please. Will you [illegible] your friendship?

ALC. Sir . . .

ORON. What! you refuse me?

ALC. Sir, you do me too [illegible]; friendship is a sacred thing,[5] and to lavish it on every occasion is surely to profane it. Judgment and [illegible] should preside [illegible] compact; we ought [illegible] more of each other before [illegible] it may happen that our [illegible] may both of us re[illegible]

ORON. [illegible]

therefore I have [illegible] ing bond [illegible] your [illegible] the king; I have his [illegible] my word, he treat[illegible] with the [illegible], I am yours in [illegible] brilliant parts, and to inaugurate our charming [illegible], I come to read you a sonnet which I [illegible] while ago, and to know whether it be [illegible].

ALC. I am not fit, sir, to decide such a matter. You will therefore excuse me.

ORON. Why so?

ALC. I have the failing of being a little more sincere [illegible] those things than is necessary.

ORON. The [illegible] thing I ask; and I should have reason to complain, if, in laying myself [illegible] to you that you might give me your frank opinion, you should deceive me, and disguise anything from me.

ALC. If that be the case, sir, I am perfectly willing.

ORON. *Sonnet* . . . It is a sonnet . . . *Hope* . . . It is to a lady who flattered my passion with some hope. *Hope* . . . They are not long, pompous verses, but mild, tender and melting little lines.

(*At every one of these interruptions he looks at Alceste.*)

ALC. We shall see.

ORON. Hope . . . I do not know whether the style will strike you as sufficiently clear and easy, and whether you will approve of my choice of words.

ALC. We shall soon see, sir.

ORON. Besides, you must know that I was [illegible] quarter of an hour in composing it.

ALC. [illegible], sir: the time signifies [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible] and all is gone!

PHIL. [illegible] charmed with this little bit.

ALC. (*Softly to Philinte.*) What! do you mean to tell me that you like this stuff?

ORON. [illegible]

> You [illegible] complacency,
> But less would have sufficed,
> You should not take that trouble
> To give me naught but hope.

PHIL. In what pretty terms these thoughts are put!

ALC. How now! you vile flatterer, you praise this rubbish!

JACQUES LEMAN

ORON.

If I must wait eternally,
My passion, driven to extremes,
Will fly to death.
Your tender cares cannot prevent this,
Fair Phillis, aye we're in despair,
When we must hope forever.

PHIL. The conclusion is pretty, amorous, admirable.

ALC. (*Softly, and aside to Philinte.*) A plague on the conclusion! I wish you had concluded to break your nose, you poisoner to the devil!

PHIL. I never heard verses more skillfully turned.[6]

ALC. (*Softly, and aside.*) Zounds! . . .

ORON. (*To Philinte.*) You flatter me; and you are under the impression perhaps . . .

PHIL. No, I am not flattering at all.

ALC. (*Softly, and aside.*) What else are you doing, you wretch?

ORON. (*To Alceste.*) But for you, you know our agreement. Speak to me, I pray, in all sincerity.

ALC. These matters, sir, are always more or less delicate, and every one is fond of being praised for his wit. But I was saying one day to a certain person, who shall be nameless, when he showed me some of his verses, that a gentleman ought at all times to exercise a great control over that itch for writing which sometimes attacks us, and should keep a tight rein over the strong propensity which one has to display such amusements; and that, in the frequent anxiety to show their productions, people are frequently exposed to act a very foolish part.

ORON. Do you wish to convey to me by this that I am wrong in desiring . . .

ALC. I do not say that exactly. But I told him that writing without warmth becomes a bore; that there needs no other weakness to disgrace a man; that, even if people, on the other hand, had a hundred good qualities, we view them from their worst sides.

ORON. Do you find anything to object to in my sonnet?

ALC. I do not say that. But, to keep him from writing, I set before his eyes how, in our days, that desire has spoiled a great many very worthy people.

ORON. Do I write badly? Am I like them in any way?

ALC. I do not say that. But, in short, I said to him, What pressing need is there for you to rhyme, and what the deuce drives you into print? If we can pardon the sending into the world of a badly-written book, it will only be in those unfortunate men who write for their livelihood. Believe me, resist your temptations, keep these effusions from the public, and do not, how much soever you may be asked, forfeit the reputation which you enjoy at court of being a man of sense and a gentleman, to take, from the hands of a greedy printer, that of a ridiculous and wretched author. That is what I tried to make him understand.

ORON. This is all well and good, and I seem to understand you. But I should like to know what there is in my sonnet to . . .

ALC. Candidly, you had better put it in your closet. You have been following bad models, and your expressions are not at all natural. Pray what is—*Rocks for a while our tedious pain?* And what, *When naught remains and all is gone?* What, *You should not take that trouble to give me naught but hope?* And what, *Phillis, aye we're in despair, when we must hope forever?* This figurative style, that people are so vain of, is beside all good taste and truth; it is only a play upon words,

sheer affectation, and it is not thus that nature speaks. The wretched taste of the age is what I dislike in this. Our forefathers, unpolished as they were, had a much better one; and I value all that is admired nowadays far less than an old song which I am going to repeat to you:

"Had our great monarch granted me
His Paris large and fair;
And I straightway must quit for aye
The love of my true dear;
Then would I say, King Hall, I pray,
Take back your Paris fair,
I love much mo my dear, I trow,
I love much mo my dear."

This versification is not rich, and the style is antiquated; but do you not see that it is far better than all those trumpery trifles against which good sense revolts, and that in this, passion speaks from the heart?

"Had our great monarch granted me
His Paris large and fair;
And I straightway must quit for aye
The love of my true dear;
Then would I say, King Hall, I pray,
Take back your Paris fair,
I love much mo my dear, I trow,
I love much mo my dear."

This is what a really loving heart would say. (*To Philinte, who is laughing.*) Yes, master wag, in spite of all your wit, I care more for this than for all the florid pomp and the tinsel which everybody is admiring nowadays.

ORON. And I, I maintain that my verses are very good.

ALC. Doubtless you have your reasons for thinking them so; but you will allow me to have mine, which, with your permission, will remain independent.

ORON. It is enough for me that others prize them.

ALC. That is because they know how to dissemble, which I do not.

ORON. Do you really believe that you have such a great share of wit?

ALC. If I praised your verses, I should have more.

ORON. I shall do very well without your approbation.

ALC. You will have to do without it, if it be all the same.

ORON. I should like much to see you compose some on the same subject, just to have a sample of your style.

ALC. I might, perchance, make some as bad; but I should take good care not to show them to anyone.

ORON. You are mighty positive; and this great sufficiency . . .

ALC. Pray, seek some one else to flatter you, and not me.

ORON. But, my little sir, drop this haughty tone.

ALC. In truth, my big sir, I shall do as I like.

PHIL. (*Coming between them.*) Stop, gentlemen! that is carrying the matter too far. Cease, I pray.

ORON. Ah! I am wrong, I confess; and I leave the field to you. I am your servant, sir, most heartily.

ALC. And I, sir, am your most humble servant.

SCENE III.—PHILINTE, ALCESTE.

PHIL. Well! you see. By being too sincere, you have got a nice affair on your hands; I saw that Oronte, in order to be flattered . . .

ALC. Do not talk to me.

PHIL. But . . .

ALC. No more society for me.

PHIL. Is it too much . . .

ALC. Leave me alone.

PHIL. If I . . .

ALC. Not another word.

PHIL. But what . . .

ALC. I will hear no more.

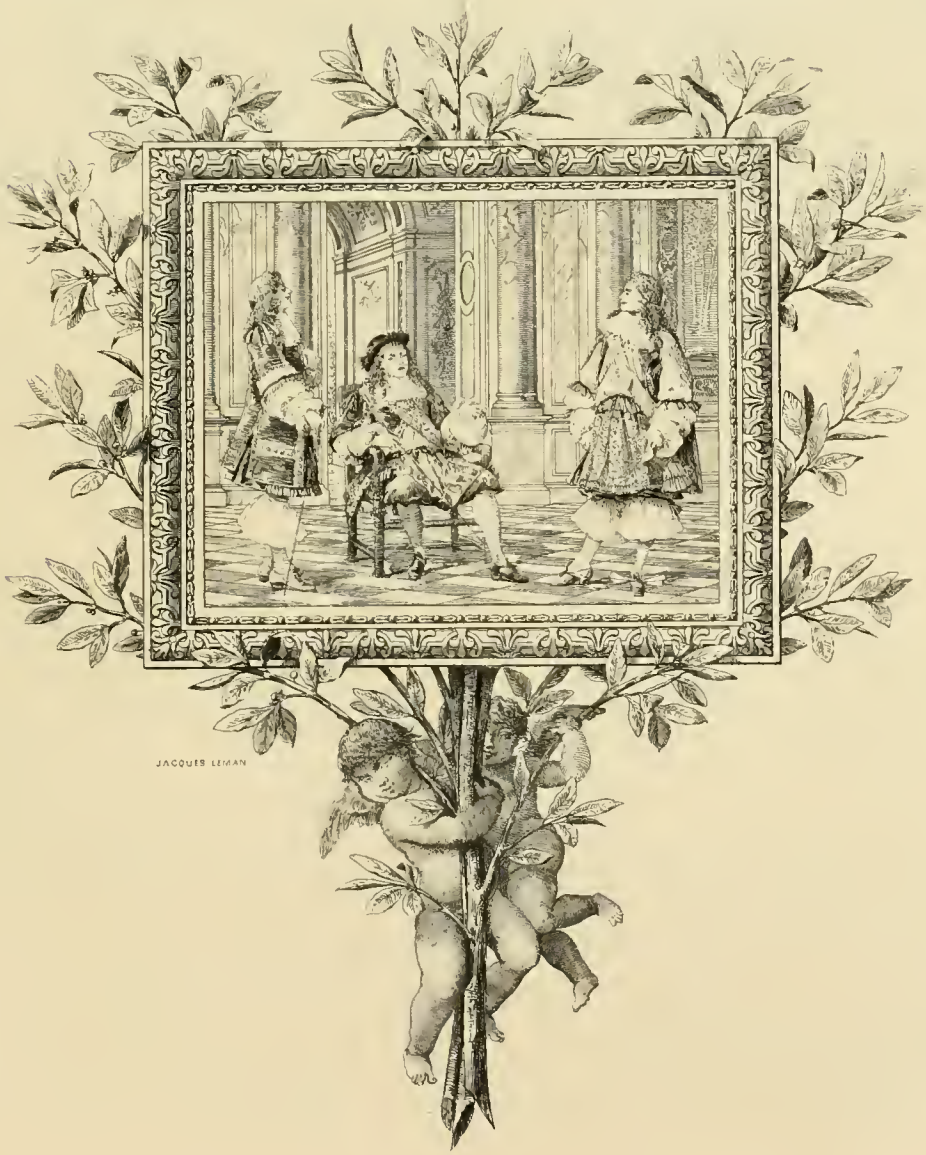
PHIL. But . . .

ALC. Again?

PHIL. People insult . . .

ALC. Ah! zounds! this is too much. Do not dog my steps.

PHIL. You are making fun of me; I shall not leave you.



ACT II.

SCENE I.—Alceste, Celimene.

Alc. Will you have me speak candidly to you, madam? Well, then, I am very much dissatisfied with your behavior. I am very angry when I think of it; and I perceive that we shall have to break with each other. Yes; I should only deceive you were I to speak otherwise. Sooner or later a rupture is unavoidable; and if I were to promise the contrary a thousand times, I should not be able to bear this any longer.

Cel. Oh, I see! it is to quarrel with me, that you wished to conduct me home?

Alc. I do not quarrel. But your disposition, madam, is too ready to give any first comer an entrance into your heart. Too many admirers beset you; and my temper cannot put up with that.

Cel. Am I to blame for having too many admirers? Can I prevent people from thinking me amiable? and am I to take a stick to drive them away, when they endeavor by tender means to visit me?

Alc. No, madam, there is no need for a stick, but only a heart less yielding and less melting at their love-tales. I am aware that

your good looks accompany you, go where you will; but your reception retains those whom your eyes attract; and that gentleness, accorded to those who surrender their arms, finishes on their hearts the sway which your charms began. The too agreeable expectation which you offer them increases their assiduities towards you; and your complacency, a little less extended, would drive away the great crowd of so many admirers. But, tell me, at least, madam, by what good fortune Clitandre has the happiness of pleasing you so mightily? Upon what basis of merit and sublime virtue do you ground the honor of your regard for him? Is it by the long nail on his little finger that he has acquired the esteem which you display for him? Are you, like all the rest of the fashionable world, fascinated by the dazzling merit of his fair wig? Do his great rolls make you love him? Do his many ribbons charm you? Is it by the attraction of his large *rhingrave*,[7] that he has conquered your heart, whilst at the same time he pretended to be your slave? Or have his manner of smiling, and his falsetto voice,[8] found out the secret of moving your feelings?

CEL. How unjustly you take umbrage at him! Do not you know why I countenance him; and that he has promised to interest all his friends in my lawsuit?

ALC. Lose your lawsuit, madam, with patience, and do not countenance a rival whom I detest.

CEL. But you are getting jealous of the whole world.

ALC. It is because the whole world is so kindly received by you.

CEL. That is the very thing to calm your frightened mind, because my good will is diffused over all: you would have more reason to be offended if you saw me entirely occupied with one.

ALC. But as for me, whom you accuse of too much jealousy, what have I more than any of them, madam, pray?

CEL. The happiness of knowing that you are beloved.

ALC. And what grounds has my love-sick heart for believing it?

CEL. I think that, as I have taken the trouble to tell you so, such an avowal ought to satisfy you.

ALC. But who will assure me that you may not, at the same time, say as much to everybody else perhaps?

CEL. Certainly, for a lover, this is a pretty amorous speech, and you make me out a very nice lady. Well! to remove such a suspicion, I retract this moment everything I have said; and no one but yourself shall for the future impose upon you. Will that satisfy you?

ALC. Zounds! why do I love you so! Ah! if ever I get heart-whole out of your hands, I shall bless Heaven for this rare good fortune. I make no secret of it; I do all that is possible to tear this unfortunate attachment from my heart; but hitherto my greatest efforts have been of no avail; and it is for my sins that I love you thus.

CEL. It is very true that your affection for me is unequaled.

ALC. As for that, I can challenge the whole world. My love for you cannot be conceived; and never, madam, has any man loved as I do.

CEL. Your method, however, is entirely new, for you love people only to quarrel with them; it is in peevish expressions alone that your feelings vent themselves; no one ever saw such a grumbling swain.

ALC. But it lies with you alone to dissipate this ill-humor. For mercy's sake let us make an end of all these bickerings; deal openly with each other, and try to put a stop . . .[9]

SCENE II. — CELIMENE, ALCESTE, BASQUE.

CEL. What is the matter?

BAS. Acaste is below.

CEL. Very well! bid him come up.

SCENE III.—CELIMENE, ALCESTE.

ALC. What! can one never have a little private conversation with you? You are always ready to receive company; and you cannot, for a single instant, make up your mind to be "not at home."

CEL. Do you wish me to quarrel with Acaste?

ALC. You have such regard for people, which I by no means like.

CEL. He is a man never to forgive me, if he knew that his presence could annoy me.

ALC. And what is that to you, to inconvenience yourself so . . .

CEL. But, good Heaven! the amity of such as he is of importance; they are a kind of people who, I do not know how, have acquired the right to be heard at court. They take their part in every conversation; they can do you no good, but they may do you harm; and, whatever support one may find elsewhere, it will never do to be on bad terms with these very noisy gentry.

ALC. In short, whatever people may say or do, you always find reasons to bear with everyone; and your very careful judgment . . .

SCENE IV. — ALCESTE, CELIMENE, BASQUE.

BAS. Clitandre is here too, madam.

ALC. Exactly so. (*Wishes to go.*)

CEL. Where are you running to?

ALC. I am going.

CEL. Stay.

ALC. For what?

CEL. Stay.

ALC. I cannot.

CEL. I wish it.

ALC. I will not. These conversations only weary me; and it is too bad of you to wish me to endure them.

CEL. I wish it, I wish it.

ALC. No, it is impossible.

CEL. Very well, then! go, begone; you can do as you like.

SCENE V.—ELIANTE, PHILINTE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE, ALCESTE, CELIMENE, BASQUE.

EL. (*To Célimène.*) Here are the two marquises coming up with us. Has anyone told you?

CEL. Yes. (*To Basque.*) Place chairs for everyone. (*Basque places chairs, and exit.*) (*To Alceste.*) You are not gone?

ALC. No; but I am determined, madam, to have you make up your mind either for them or for me.

CEL. Hold your tongue.

ALC. This very day you shall explain yourself.

CEL. You are losing your senses.

ALC. Not at all. You shall declare yourself.

CEL. Indeed!

ALC. You must take your stand.

CEL. You are jesting, I believe.

ALC. Not so. But you must choose. I have been too patient.[10]

CL. Egad! I have just come from the Louvre, where Cléonte, at the levee, made himself very ridiculous. Has he not some friend who could charitably enlighten him upon his manners?

CEL. Truth to say, he compromises himself very much in society; everywhere he carries himself with an air that is noticed at first sight, and when after a short absence you meet him again, he is still more absurd than ever.

AC. Egad! Talk of absurd people, just now, one of the most tedious ones has annoyed me. That reasoner, Damon, kept me, if you please, for a full hour in the broiling sun, away from my Sedan chair.[11]

CEL. He is a strange talker, and one who always finds the means of telling you nothing with a great flow of words. There is no sense at all in his tittle-tattle, and all that we hear is but noise.

EL. (*To Philinte.*) This beginning is not bad; and the conversation takes a sufficiently agreeable turn against our neighbors.

CL. Timante, too, madam, is another original.

CEL. He is a complete mystery from top to toe, who throws upon you, in passing, a bewildered glance, and who, without having anything to do, is always busy. Whatever he utters is accompanied with grimaces; he quite oppresses people by his ceremonies. To interrupt a conversation, he has always a secret to whisper to you, and that secret turns out to be nothing. Of the merest molehill he makes a mountain, and whispers everything in your ear, even to a "good-day."

AC. And Geralde, madam?

CEL. That tiresome story-teller! He never comes down from his nobleman's pedestal; he continually mixes with the best society, and never quotes any one of minor rank than a duke, prince, or princess. Rank is his hobby, and his conversation is of nothing but

horses, carriages and dogs. He *thee's* and *thou's* persons of the highest standing, and the word *sir* is quite obsolete with him.

CL. It is said that he is on the best of terms with Bélise.

CEL. Poor silly woman, and the dreariest company! When she comes to visit me, I suffer from martyrdom; one has to rack one's brains perpetually to find out what to say to her; and the impossibility of her expressing her thoughts allows the conversation to drop every minute. In vain you try to overcome her stupid silence by the assistance of the most commonplace topics; even the fine weather, the rain, the heat and the cold are subjects, which, with her, are soon exhausted. Yet for all that, her calls, unbearable enough, are prolonged to an insufferable length; and you may consult the clock, or yawn twenty times, but she stirs no more than a log of wood.

AC. What think you of Adraste?

CEL. Oh! What excessive pride! He is a man positively puffed out with conceit. His self-importance is never satisfied with the court, against which he inveighs daily; and whenever an office, a place, or a living is bestowed on another, he is sure to think himself unjustly treated.

CL. But young Cléon, whom the most respectable people go to see, what say you of him?

CEL. That it is to his cook he owes his distinction, and to his table that people pay visits.

EL. He takes pains to provide the most dainty dishes.

CEL. True; but I should be very glad if he would not dish up himself. His foolish person is a very bad dish, which, to my thinking, spoils every entertainment which he gives.

PHIL. His uncle Damis is very much esteemed; what say you to him, madam?

CEL. He is one of my friends.

PHIL. I think him a perfect gentleman, and sensible enough.

CEL. True; but he pretends to too much wit, which annoys me. He is always upon stilts, and, in all his conversations, one sees him laboring to say smart things. Since he took it into his head to be clever, he is so difficult to please that nothing suits his taste. He must needs find mistakes in everything that one writes, and thinks that to bestow praise does not become a wit, that to find fault shows learning, that only fools admire and laugh, and that, by not approving of anything in the works of our time, he is superior to all other people. Even in conversations he finds something to cavil at, the subjects are too trivial for his condescension; and, with arms crossed on his breast, he looks down from the height of his intellect with pity on what everyone says.

AC. Drat it! his very picture.

CL. (*To Célimène.*) You have an admirable knack of portraying people to the life.

ALC. Capital, go on, my fine courtly friends. You spare no one, and every one will have his turn. Nevertheless, let but any one of those persons appear, and we shall see you rush to meet him, offer him your hand, and, with a flattering kiss, give weight to your protestations of being his servant.

CL. Why this to us? If what is said offends you, the reproach must be addressed to this lady.

ALC. No, gadzooks! it concerns you; for your assenting smiles draw from her wit all these slanderous remarks. Her satirical vein is incessantly recruited by the culpable incense of your flattery; and her mind would find

fewer charms in raillery, if she discovered that no one applauded her. Thus it is that to flatterers we ought everywhere to impute the vices which are sown among mankind.

PHIL. But why do you take so great an interest in those people, for you would condemn the very things that are blamed in them?

CEL. And is not this gentleman bound to contradict? Would you have him subscribe to the general opinion; and must he not everywhere display the spirit of contradiction with which Heaven has endowed him? Other people's sentiments can never please him. He always supports a contrary idea, and he would think himself too much of the common herd, were he observed to be of any one's opinion but his own. The honor of gainsaying has so many charms for him, that he very often takes up the cudgels against himself; he combats his own sentiments as soon as he hears them from other folks' lips.[12]

ALC. In short, madam, the laughers are on your side; and you may launch your satire against me.

PHIL. But it is very true, too, that you always take up arms against everything that is said; and, that your avowed spleen cannot bear people to be praised or blamed.

ALC. 'Sdeath! spleen against mankind is always seasonable, because they are never in the right, and I see that, in all their dealings, they either praise impertinently, or censure rashly.

CEL. But . . .

ALC. No, madam, no, though I were to die for it, you have pastimes which I cannot tolerate; and people are very wrong to nourish in your heart this great attachment to the very faults which they blame in you.

CL. As for myself, I do not know; but I openly acknowledge that hitherto I have thought this lady faultless.

AC. I see that she is endowed with charms and attractions; but the faults which she has have not struck me.

ALC. So much the more have they struck me; and far from appearing blind, she knows that I take care to reproach her with them. The more we love any one, the less we ought to flatter her. True love shows itself by overlooking nothing; and, were I a lady, I would banish all those mean-spirited lovers who submit to all my sentiments, and whose mild complacencies every moment offer up incense to my vagaries.

CEL. In short, if hearts were ruled by you we ought, to love well, to relinquish all tenderness, and make it the highest aim of perfect attachment to rail heartily at the persons we love.

EL. Love, generally speaking, is little apt to put up with these decrees, and lovers are always observed to extol their choice. Their passion never sees aught to blame in it, and in the beloved all things become lovable. They think their faults perfections, and invent sweet terms to call them by. The pale one vies with the jessamine in fairness; another, dark enough to frighten people, becomes an adorable brunette; the lean one has a good shape and is lithe; the stout one has a portly and majestic bearing; the slattern, who has few charms, passes under the name of a careless beauty; the giantess seems a very goddess in their sight; the dwarf is an epitome of all the wonders of Heaven; the proud one has a soul worthy of a diadem; the artful brims with wit; the silly one is very good-natured;

the chatterbox is good-tempered; and the silent one modest and reticent. Thus a passionate swain loves even the very faults of those of whom he is enamored.[13]

ALC. And I maintain that . . .

CEL. Let us drop the subject, and take a turn or two in the gallery. What! are you going, gentlemen?

CL. AND AC. No, no, madam.

ALC. The fear of their departure troubles you very much. Go when you like, gentlemen; but I tell you beforehand that I shall not leave until you leave.

AC. Unless it inconveniences this lady, I have nothing to call me elsewhere the whole day.

CL. I, provided I am present when the king retires,[14] I have no other matter to call me away.

CEL. (*To Alceste.*) You only joke, I fancy.

ALC. Not at all. We shall soon see whether it is me of whom you wish to get rid.

SCENE VI.—ALCESTE, CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ACASTE, PHILINTE, CLITANDRE, BASQUE.

BAS. (*To Alceste.*) There is a man down stairs, sir, who wishes to speak to you on business which cannot be postponed.

ALC. Tell him that I have no such urgent business.

BAS. He wears a jacket with large plaited skirts embroidered with gold.

CEL. (*To Alceste.*) Go and see who it is, or else let him come in.

SCENE VII.—ALCESTE, CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ACASTE, PHILINTE, CLITANDRE, A GUARD OF THE MARECHAUSSÉE.[15]

ALC. (*Going to meet the Guard.*) What may be your pleasure? Come in, sir.

GUARD. I would have a few words privately with you, sir.

ALC. You may speak aloud, sir, so as to let me know.

GUARD. The Marshals of France, whose commands I bear, hereby summon you to appear before them immediately, sir.

ALC. Whom? Me, sir?

GUARD. Yourself.

ALC. And for what?

PHIL. (*To Alceste.*) It is this ridiculous affair between you and Oronte.

CEL. (*To Philinte.*) What do you mean?

PHIL. Oronte and he have been insulting each other just now about some trifling verses which he did not like; and the Marshals wish to nip the affair in the bud.

ALC. But I shall never show any base complacency.

PHIL. But you must obey the summons: come, get ready.

ALC. How will they settle this between us? Will the edict of these gentlemen oblige me to approve of the verses which are the cause of our quarrel? I will not retract what I have said; I think them abominable.

PHIL. But with a little milder tone . . .

ALC. I will not abate one jot; the verses are execrable.

PHIL. You ought to show some more accommodating spirit. Come along.

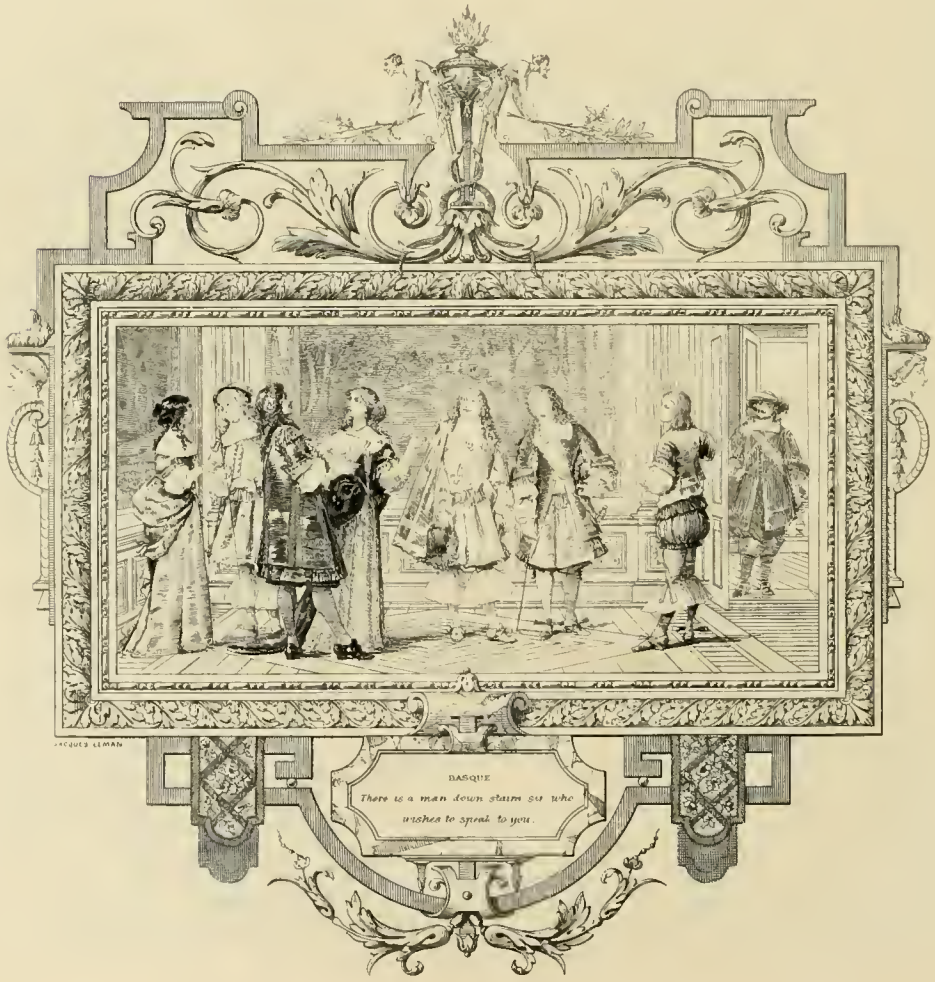
ALC. I shall go, but nothing shall induce me to retract.

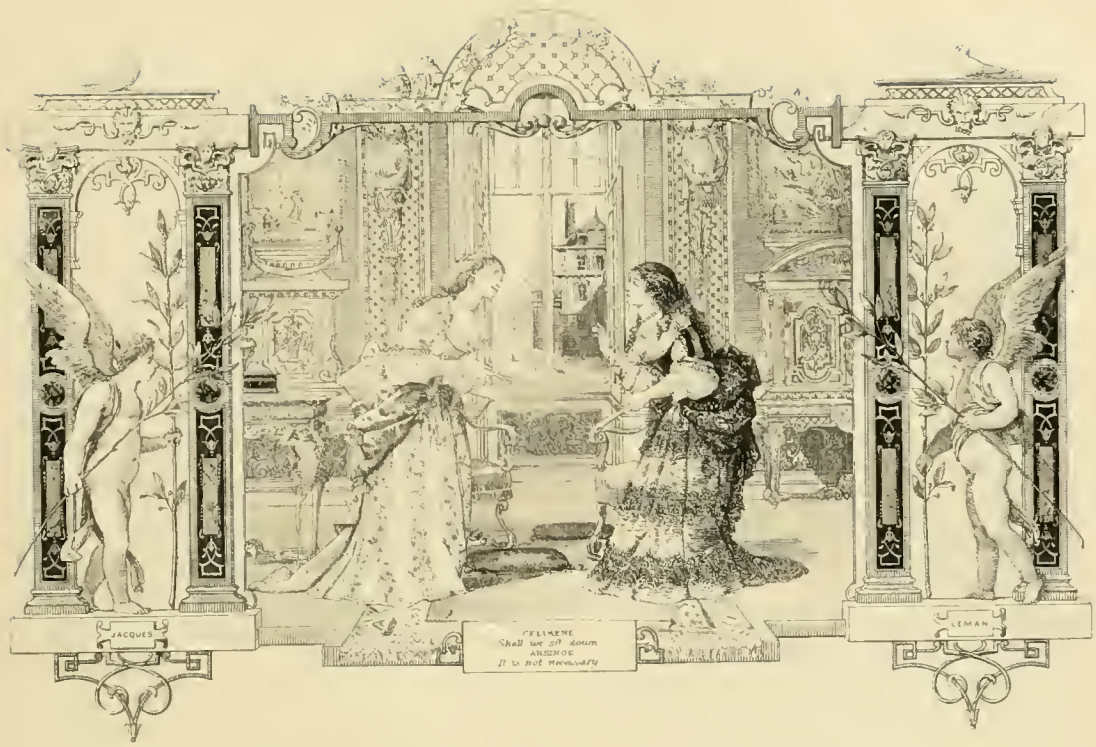
PHIL. Go and show yourself.

ALC. Unless an express order from the king himself commands me to approve of the verses which cause all this trouble, I shall ever maintain, egad, that they are bad, and that a fellow deserves hanging for making them.[16] (*To Clitandre and Acaste who are laughing.*) Hang it! gentlemen, I did not think I was so amusing.

CEL. Go quickly whither you are wanted.

ALC. I am going, madam; but shall come back here to finish our discussion.





ACT III.

SCENE I.—CLITANDRE, ACASTE.

CL. My dear marquis, you appear mightily pleased with yourself; everything amuses you, and nothing discomposes you. But really and truly, think you, without flattering yourself, that you have good reasons for appearing so joyful?

AC. Egad, I do not find, on looking at myself, any matter to be sorrowful about. I am wealthy, I am young, and descend from a family which, with some appearance of truth, may be called noble; and I think that, by the rank which my lineage confers upon me, there are very few offices to which I might not aspire. As for courage, which we ought especially to value, it is well known—this without vanity—that I do not lack it; and people have seen me carry on an affair of honor in a manner sufficiently vigorous and brisk. As for wit, I have some, no doubt; and as for good taste, to judge and reason upon everything without study; at "first nights," of which I am very fond, to take my place as a critic upon the stage, to give my opinion as a judge, to applaud,

and point out the best passages by repeated bravoes, I am sufficiently adroit; I carry myself well, and am good-looking, have particularly fine teeth, and a good figure. I believe, without flattering myself, that, as for dressing in good taste, very few will dispute the palm with me. I find myself treated with every possible consideration, very much beloved by the fair sex; and I stand very well with the king. With all that, I think, dear marquis, that one might be satisfied with one's self anywhere.

Cl. True. But, finding so many easy conquests elsewhere, why come you here to utter fruitless sighs?

Ac. I? Zounds! I have neither the wish nor the disposition to put up with the indifference of any woman. I leave it to awkward and ordinary people to burn constantly for cruel fair maidens, to languish at their feet, and to bear with their severities, to invoke the aid of sighs and tears, and to endeavor, by long and persistent assiduities, to obtain what is denied to their little merit. But men of my stamp, marquis, are not made to love on trust, and be at all the expenses themselves. Be the merit of the fair ever so great, I think, thank Heaven, that we have our value as well as they; that it is not reasonable to enthrall a heart like mine without its costing them anything; and that, to weigh everything in a just scale, the advances should be, at least, reciprocal.

Cl. Then you think that you are right enough here, marquis?

Ac. I have some reason, marquis, to think so.

Cl. Believe me, divest yourself of this great mistake; you flatter yourself, dear friend, and are altogether self-deceived.

Ac. It is true. I flatter myself, and am, in fact, altogether, self-deceived.

Cl. But what causes you to judge your happiness to be complete?

Ac. I flatter myself.

Cl. Upon what do you ground your belief?

Ac. I am altogether self-deceived.

Cl. Have you any sure proofs?

Ac. I am mistaken, I tell you.

Cl. Has Célimène made you any secret avowal of her inclinations?

Ac. No, I am very badly treated by her.

Cl. Answer me, I pray.

Ac. I meet with nothing but rebuffs.

Cl. A truce to your raillery; and tell me what hope she has held out to you.

Ac. I am the rejected, and you are the lucky one. She has a great aversion to me, and one of these days I shall have to hang myself.

Cl. Nonsense. Shall we two, marquis, to adjust our love affairs, make a compact together? Whenever one of us shall be able to show a certain proof of having the greater share in Célimène's heart, the other shall leave the field free to the supposed conqueror, and by that means rid him of an obstinate rival.

Ac. Egad! you please me with these words, and I agree to that from the bottom of my heart. But, hush.

SCENE II.—Celimene, Acaste, Clitandre.

Cel. What! here still?

Cli. Love, madam, detains us.

CEL. I hear a carriage below. Do you know whose it is?

CLI. No.

SCENE III. — CELIMENE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE, BASQUE.

BAS. Arsinoé, madam, is coming up to see you.

CEL. What does the woman want with me?

BAS. Eliante is down stairs talking to her.

CEL. What is she thinking about, and what brings her here?

AC. She has everywhere the reputation of being a consummate prude, and her fervent zeal . . .

CEL. Pshaw, downright humbug. In her inmost soul she is as worldly as any; and her every nerve is strained to hook some one, without being successful, however. She can only look with envious eyes on the accepted lovers of others; and in her wretched condition, forsaken by all, she is forever railing against the blindness of the age. She endeavors to hide the dreadful isolation of her home under the false cloak of prudishness; and to save the credit of her feeble charms, she brands as criminal the power which they lack. Yet a swain would not come at all amiss to the lady; and she has even a tender hankering after Alceste. Every attention that he pays me, she looks upon as a theft committed by me, and as an insult to her attractions; and her jealous spite, which she can hardly hide, breaks out against me at every opportunity, and in an underhand manner. In short, I never saw anything, to my fancy, so stupid. She is impertinent to the last degree . . .

SCENE IV. — ARSINOE, CELIMENE, CLITANDRE, ACASTE.

CEL. Ah! what happy chance brings you here, madam? I was really getting uneasy about you.

ARS. I have come to give you some advice as a matter of duty.

CEL. How very glad I am to see you!

(*Exeunt Clitandre and Acaste, laughing.*)

SCENE V.—ARSINOE, CELIMENE.

ARS. They could not have left at a more convenient opportunity.

CEL. Shall we sit down?

ARS. It is not necessary. Friendship, madam, must especially show itself in matters which may be of consequence to us; and as there are none of greater importance than honor and decorum, I come to prove to you, by an advice which closely touches your reputation, the friendship which I feel for you. Yesterday I was with some people of rare virtue, where the conversation turned upon you; and there, your conduct, which is causing some stir, was unfortunately, madam, far from being commended. That crowd of people, whose visits you permit, your gallantry and the noise it makes, were criticised rather more freely and more severely than I could have wished. You can easily imagine whose part I took. I did all I could to defend you. I exonerated you, and vouched for the purity of your heart, and the honesty of your intentions. But you know there are things in life which one cannot well defend, although one may have the greatest wish to do so; and I was at last obliged to confess that the way in which you lived did you some harm; that, in the eyes of the world, it had a doubtful look; that there was no story so ill-natured as not to be everywhere told about it; and that, if you liked, your behavior might give less cause for censure. Not that I believe that decency is in any way outraged. Heaven forbid that I should harbor such a thought! But the world is so ready to give credit to the faintest shadow of a crime, and it is not enough to live blameless one's self. Madam, I believe you to be too sensible not to take in good part this useful counsel, and not to ascribe it only to the inner promptings of an affection that feels an interest in your welfare.

CEL. Madam, I have a great many thanks to return you. Such counsel lays me under an obligation; and, far from taking it amiss, I intend this very moment to repay the favor, by giving you an advice which also touches your reputation closely; and as I see you prove yourself my friend by acquainting me with the stories that are current of me, I shall follow so nice an example, by informing you what is said of you. In a house the other day, where I paid a visit, I met some people of exemplary merit, who, while talking of the proper duties of a well spent life, turned the topic of the conversation upon you, madam. There your prudishness and your too fervent zeal were not at all cited as a good example. This affectation of a grave demeanor, your eternal conversations on wisdom and honor, your mincings and mouthings at the slightest shadows of indecency, which an innocent though ambiguous word may convey, that lofty esteem in which you hold yourself, and those pitying glances which you cast upon all, your frequent lectures and your acrid censures on things which are pure and harmless; all this, if I may speak frankly to you, madam, was blamed unanimously. What is the good, said they, of this modest mien and this prudent exterior, which is belied by all the rest? She says her prayers with the utmost exactness; but she beats her servants and pays them no wages. She displays great fervor in every place of devotion; but she paints and wishes to appear handsome. She covers the nudities in her pictures; but loves the reality. As for me, I undertook your defense against everyone, and positively assured them that it was nothing but scandal; but the general opinion went against me, and they came to the conclusion that you would do well to concern yourself less about the actions of others, and take a little more pains with your own; that one ought to look a long time at one's

self before thinking of condemning other people; that when we wish to correct others, we ought to add the weight of a blameless life; and that even then, it would be better to leave it to those whom Heaven has ordained for the task. Madam, I also believe you to be too sensible not to take in good part this useful counsel, and not to ascribe it only to the inner promptings of an affection that feels an interest in your welfare.

AR. To whatever we may be exposed when we reprove, I did not expect this retort, madam, and, by its very sting, I see how my sincere advice has hurt your feelings.

CEL. On the contrary, madam; and, if we were reasonable, those mutual counsels would become customary. If honestly made use of, it would to a great extent destroy the excellent opinion people have of themselves. It depends entirely on you whether we shall continue this trustworthy practice with equal zeal, and whether we shall take great care to tell each other, between ourselves, what we hear, you of me, I of you.

AR. Ah! madam, I can hear nothing said of you. It is in me that people find so much to reprove.

CEL. Madam, it is easy, I believe, to blame or praise everything; and everyone may be right, according to their age and taste. There is a time for gallantry, there is one also for prudishness. One may out of policy take to it, when youthful attractions have faded away. It sometimes serves to hide vexatious ravages of time. I do not say that I shall not follow your example, one of these days. Those things come with old age; but twenty, as everyone well knows, is not an age to play the prude.

AR. You certainly pride yourself upon a very small advantage, and you boast terribly of your age. Whatever difference there may be between your years and mine, there is no occasion to make such a tremendous fuss about it; and I am at a loss to know, madam, why you should get so angry, and what makes you goad me in this manner.

CEL. And I, madam, am at an equal loss to know why one hears you inveigh so bitterly against me everywhere. Must I always suffer for your vexations? Can I help it, if people refuse to pay you any attentions? If men will fall in love with me, and will persist in offering me each day those attentions of which your heart would wish to see me deprived, I cannot alter it, and it is not my fault. I leave you the field free, and do not prevent you from having charms to attract people.

AR. Alas! and do you think that I would trouble myself about this crowd of lovers of which you are so vain, and that it is not very easy to judge at what price they may be attracted nowadays? Do you wish to make it be believed, that, judging by what is going on, your merit alone attracts this crowd; that their affection for you is strictly honest, and that it is for nothing but your virtue that they all pay you their court? People are not blinded by those empty pretenses; the world is not duped in that way; and I see many ladies who are capable of inspiring a tender feeling, yet who do not succeed in attracting a crowd of beaux; and from that fact we may draw our conclusion that those conquests are not altogether made without some great advances; that no one cares to sigh for us, for our handsome looks only; and that the attentions bestowed on us are generally dearly bought. Do not therefore puff yourself up with vainglory about the trifling advantages of a poor victory; and moderate slightly the

pride on your good looks, instead of looking down upon people on account of them. If I were at all envious about your conquests, I dare say, that I might manage like other people; be under no restraint, and thus show plainly that one may have lovers, when one wishes for them.

CEL. Do have some then, madam, and let us see you try it; endeavor to please by this extraordinary secret; and without . . .

AR. Let us break off this conversation, madam, it might excite too much both your temper and mine; and I would have already taken my leave, had I not been obliged to wait for my carriage.

CEL. Please stay as long as you like, and do not hurry yourself on that account, madam. But instead of wearying you any longer with my presence, I am going to give you some more pleasant company. This gentleman, who comes very opportunely, will better supply my place in entertaining you.[17]

SCENE VI. — ALCESTE, CELIMENE, ARSINOE.

CEL. Alceste, I have to write a few lines, which I cannot well delay. Please to stay with this lady; she will all the more easily excuse my rudeness.

SCENE VII.—ALCESTE, ARSINOE.

AR. You see, I am left here to entertain you, until my coach comes round. She could have devised no more charming treat for me, than such a conversation. Indeed, people of exceptional merit attract the esteem and love of every one; and yours has undoubtedly some secret charm, which makes me feel interested in all your doings. I could wish that the court, with a real regard to your merits would do more justice to your deserts. You have reason to complain; and it vexes me to see that day by day nothing is done for you.

ALC. For me, madam? And by what right could I pretend to anything? What service have I rendered to the State? Pray, what have I done, so brilliant in itself, to complain of the court doing nothing for me?

AR. Not everyone whom the State delights to honor, has rendered signal services; there must be an opportunity as well as the power; and the abilities which you allow us to perceive ought . . .

ALC. For Heaven's sake, let us have no more of my abilities, I pray. What would you have the court to do? It would have enough to do, and have its hands full, to discover the merits of people.

AR. Sterling merit discovers itself. A great deal is made of yours in certain places; and let me tell you that, not later than yesterday, you were highly spoken of in two distinguished circles, by people of very great standing.

ALC. As for that, madam, everyone is praised nowadays, and very little discrimination is shown in our times. Everything is equally endowed with great merit, so that it is no longer an honor to be lauded. Praises abound, they throw them at one's head, and even my valet is put in the gazette.[18]

AR. As for me, I could wish that, to bring yourself into greater notice, some place at court might tempt you. If you will only give me a hint that you seriously think about it, a great many engines might be set in motion to serve you; and I know some people whom I could employ for you, and who would manage the matter smoothly enough.

ALC. And what should I do when I got there, madam? My disposition rather prompts me to keep away from it. Heaven, when ushering me into the world, did not give me a mind suited for the atmosphere of a court. I have not the qualifications necessary for success, nor for making my fortune there. To be open and candid is my chief talent; I possess not the art of deceiving people in conversation; and he who has not the gift of concealing his thoughts, ought not to stay long in those places. When not at court, one has not, doubtless, that standing, and the advantage of those honorable titles which it bestows nowadays; but, on the other hand, one has not the vexation of playing the silly fool. One has not to bear a thousand galling rebuffs; one is not, as it were, forced to praise the verses of mister so-and-so, to laud madam such and such, and to put up with the whims of some ingenuous marquis.[19]

AR. Since you wish it, let us drop the subject of the court: but I cannot help grieving for your amours; and, to tell you my opinions candidly on that head, I could heartily wish your affections better bestowed. You certainly deserve a much happier fate, and she who has fascinated you is unworthy of you.

ALC. But in saying so, madam, remember, I pray, that this lady is your friend.

AR. True. But really my conscience revolts at the thought of suffering any longer the wrong that is done to you. The position in which I see you afflicts my very soul, and I caution you that your affections are betrayed.

ALC. This is certainly showing me a deal of good feeling, madam, and such information is very welcome to a lover.

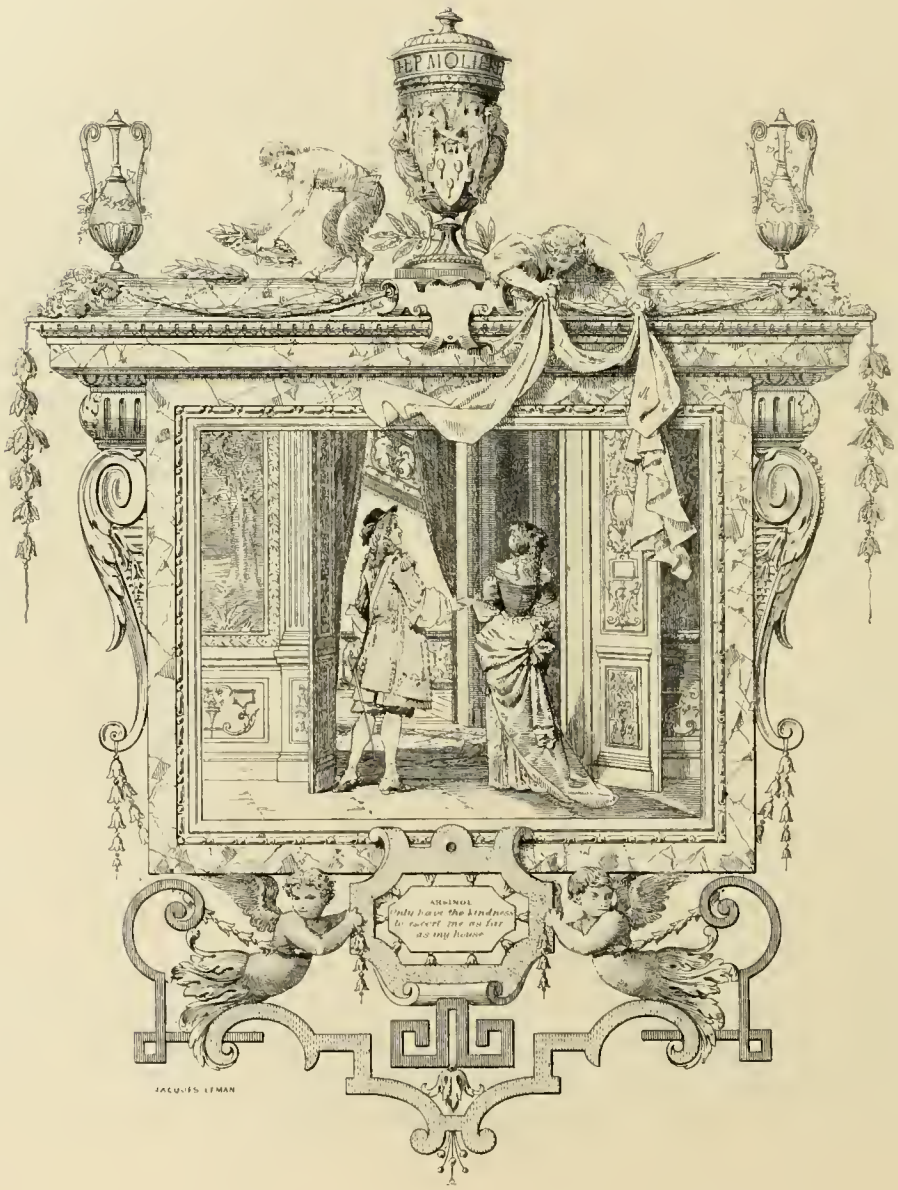
AR. Yes, for all Célimène is my friend, I do not hesitate to call her unworthy of possessing the heart of a man of honor; and hers only pretends to respond to yours.

ALC. That is very possible, madam, one cannot look into the heart; but your charitable feelings might well have refrained from awakening such a suspicion as mine.

AR. Nothing is easier than to say no more about it, if you do not wish to be undeceived.

ALC. Just so. But whatever may be openly said on this subject is not half so annoying as hints thrown out; and I for one would prefer to be plainly told that only which could be clearly proved.

Ar. Very well! and that is sufficient; I can fully enlighten you upon this subject. I will have you believe nothing but what your own eyes see. Only have the kindness to escort me as far as my house; and I will give you undeniable proof of the faithlessness of your fair one's heart;[20] and if, after that, you can find charms in anyone else, we will perhaps find you some consolation.



ACT IV.

SCENE I.—ELIANTE, PHILINTE.

PHIL. No, never have I seen so obstinate a mind, nor a reconciliation more difficult to effect. In vain was Alceste tried on all sides; he would still maintain his opinion; and never, I believe, has a more curious dispute engaged the attention of those gentlemen. "No, gentlemen," exclaimed he, "I will not retract, and I shall agree with you on every point, except on this one. At what is Oronte offended? and with what does he reproach me? Does it reflect upon his honor that he cannot write well? What is my opinion to him, which he has altogether wrongly construed? One may be a perfect gentleman, and write bad verses; those things have nothing to do with honor. I take him to be a gallant man in every way; a man of standing,

of merit, and courage, anything you like, but he is a wretched author. I shall praise, if you wish, his mode of living, his lavishness, his skill in riding, in fencing, in dancing; but as to praising his verses, I am his humble servant; and if one has not the gift of composing better, one ought to leave off rhyming altogether, unless condemned to it on forfeit of one's life."[21] In short, all the modifications they could with difficulty obtain from him, was to say, in what he thought a much gentler tone—"I am sorry, sir, to be so difficult to please; and out of regard for you, I could wish, with all my heart, to have found your sonnet a little better." And they compelled them to settle this dispute quickly with an embrace.

EL. He is very eccentric in his doings; but I must confess that I think a great deal of him; and the candor upon which he prides himself has something noble and heroic in it. It is a rare virtue nowadays, and I, for one, should not be sorry to meet with it everywhere.

PHIL. As for me, the more I see of him, the more I am amazed at that passion to which his whole heart is given up. I cannot conceive how, with a disposition like his, he has taken it into his head to love at all; and still less can I understand how your cousin happens to be the person to whom his feelings are inclined.

EL. That shows that love is not always produced by compatibility of temper; and in this case, all the pretty theories of gentle sympathies are belied.[22]

PHIL. But do you think him beloved in return, to judge from what we see?

EL. That is a point not easily decided. How can we judge whether it be true she loves? Her own heart is not so very sure of what it feels. It sometimes loves, without being quite aware of it, and at other times thinks it does, without the least grounds.

PHIL. I think that our friend will have more trouble with this cousin of yours than he imagines; and to tell you the truth, if he were of my mind, he would bestow his affections elsewhere; and by a better choice, we should see him, madam, profit by the kind feelings which your heart evinces for him.

EL. As for me, I do not mince matters, and I think that in such cases we ought to act with sincerity. I do not run counter to his tender feelings; on the contrary, I feel interested in them; and, if it depended only on me, I would unite him to the object of his love. But if, as it may happen in love affairs, his affections should receive a check, and if Célimène should respond to the love of anyone else, I could easily be prevailed upon to listen to his addresses, and I should have no repugnance whatever to them on account of their rebuff elsewhere.

PHIL. Nor do I, from my side, oppose myself, madam, to the tender feelings which you entertain for him; and he himself, if he wished, could inform you what I have taken care to say to him on that score. But if, by the union of those two, you should be prevented from accepting his attentions, all mine would endeavor to gain that great favor which your kind feelings offer to him; only too happy, madam, to have them transferred to myself, if his heart could not respond to yours.

EL. You are in the humor to jest, Philinte.

PHIL. Not so, madam, I am speaking my inmost feelings. I only wait the opportune

moment to offer myself openly, and am wishing most anxiously to hurry its advent.

SCENE II. — ALCESTE, ELIANTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. Ah, madam! obtain me justice for an offense which triumphs over all my constancy.

EL. What ails you? What disturbs you?

ALC. This much ails me, that it is death to me to think of it; and the upheaving of all creation would less overwhelm me than this accident. It is all over with me . . . My love . . . I cannot speak.

EL. Just endeavor to be composed.

ALC. Oh, just Heaven! must so many charms be allied to most odious vices of the most perfidious hearts.

EL. But, once more, what can have . . .

ALC. Alas! All is ruined! I am! I am betrayed! I am stricken to death! Célimène . . . would you credit it! Célimène deceives me and is faithless.[23]

EL. Have you just grounds for believing so?

PHIL. Perhaps it is a suspicion, rashly conceived; and your jealous temper often harbors fancies . . .

ALC. Ah! 'Sdeath, please to mind your own business, sir. (*To Eliante.*) Her treachery is but too certain, for I have in my pocket a letter, in her own handwriting. Yes, madam, a letter, intended for Oronte, has placed before my eyes my disgrace and her shame; Oronte, whose addresses I believed she avoided, and whom, of all my rivals, I feared the least.

PHIL. A letter may deceive by appearances, and is sometimes not so culpable as may be thought.

ALC. Once more, sir, leave me alone, if you please, and trouble yourself only about your own concerns.

EL. You should moderate your passion; and the insult . . .

ALC. You must be left to do that, madam; it is to you that my heart has recourse to-day to free itself from this goading pain. Avenge me on an ungrateful and perfidious relative who basely deceives such constant tenderness. Avenge me for an act that ought to fill you with horror.

EL. I avenge you? How?

ALC. By accepting my heart. Take it, madam, instead of the false one; it is in this way that I can avenge myself upon her; and I shall punish her by the sincere attachment, and the profound love, the respectful cares, the eager devotions, the ceaseless attentions which this heart will henceforth offer up at your shrine.

EL. I certainly sympathize with you in your sufferings, and do not despise your proffered heart; but the wrong done may not be

so great as you think, and you might wish to forego this desire for revenge. When the injury proceeds from a beloved object, we form many designs which we never execute; we may find as powerful a reason as we like to break off the connection, the guilty charmer is soon again innocent; all the harm we wish her quickly vanishes, and we know what a lover's anger means.

ALC. No, no, madam, no. The offense is too cruel; there will be no relenting, and I have done with her. Nothing shall change the resolution I have taken, and I should hate myself for ever loving her again. Here she comes. My anger increases at her approach. I shall taunt her with her black guilt, completely put her to the blush, and, after that, bring you a heart wholly freed from her deceitful attractions.

SCENE III.—CELIMENE, ALCESTE.

ALC. (*Aside.*) Grant, Heaven, that I may control my temper.

CEL. (*Aside.*) Ah! (*To Alceste.*) What is all this trouble that I see you in, and what mean those long-drawn sighs, and those black looks which you cast at me?

ALC. That all the wickedness of which a heart is capable is not to be compared to your perfidy; that neither fate, hell, nor Heaven in its wrath, ever produced anything so wicked as you are.[24]

CEL. These are certainly pretty compliments, which I admire very much.

ALC. Do not jest. This is no time for laughing. Blush rather, you have cause to do so; and I have undeniable proofs of your treachery. This is what the agitations of my mind prognosticated; it was not without cause that my love took alarm; by these frequent suspicions, which were hateful to you, I was trying to discover the misfortune which my eyes have beheld; and in spite of all your care and your skill in dissembling, my star foretold me what I had to fear. But do not imagine that I will bear unavenged this slight of being insulted. I know that we have no command over our inclinations, that love will everywhere spring up spontaneously, that there is no entering a heart by force, and that every soul is free to name its conqueror: I should thus have no reason to complain if you had spoken to me without dissembling, and rejected my advances from the very beginning; my heart would then have been justified in blaming fortune alone. But to see my love encouraged by a deceitful avowal on your part, is an action so treacherous and perfidious, that it cannot meet with too great a punishment; and I can allow my resentment to do anything. Yes, yes; after such an outrage, fear everything; I am no longer myself, I am mad with rage.[25] My senses, struck by the deadly blow with which you

THE MISANTHROPE

ACT IV. SCENE III.

EDM. HEDOUIN, PAINTER. F. L. KIRKPATRICK, ETCHER.

[SCENE OF THE LETTER.]

ALCESTE (*furiously*): "YOU DO NOT BLUSH ON BEHOLDING THIS WRITING!"

CELIMENE: "AND WHY SHOULD I BLUSH?"

ALCESTE: "WHAT! YOU ADD BOLDNESS TO CRAFT! WILL YOU DISOWN THIS NOTE BECAUSE IT BEARS NO NAME?"

CELIMENE: "WHY SHOULD I DISOWN IT, SINCE I WROTE IT?"

so great as you think, and you might wish to forego this desire for revenge. When the injury proceeds from a beloved object, we form many designs which we never [illegible]; we may find as powerful a reason a[illegible] to break off the connection, the guilty charmer is soon again innocent; all the [illegible] we wish her quickly vanishes, and we know what a lover's anger means.

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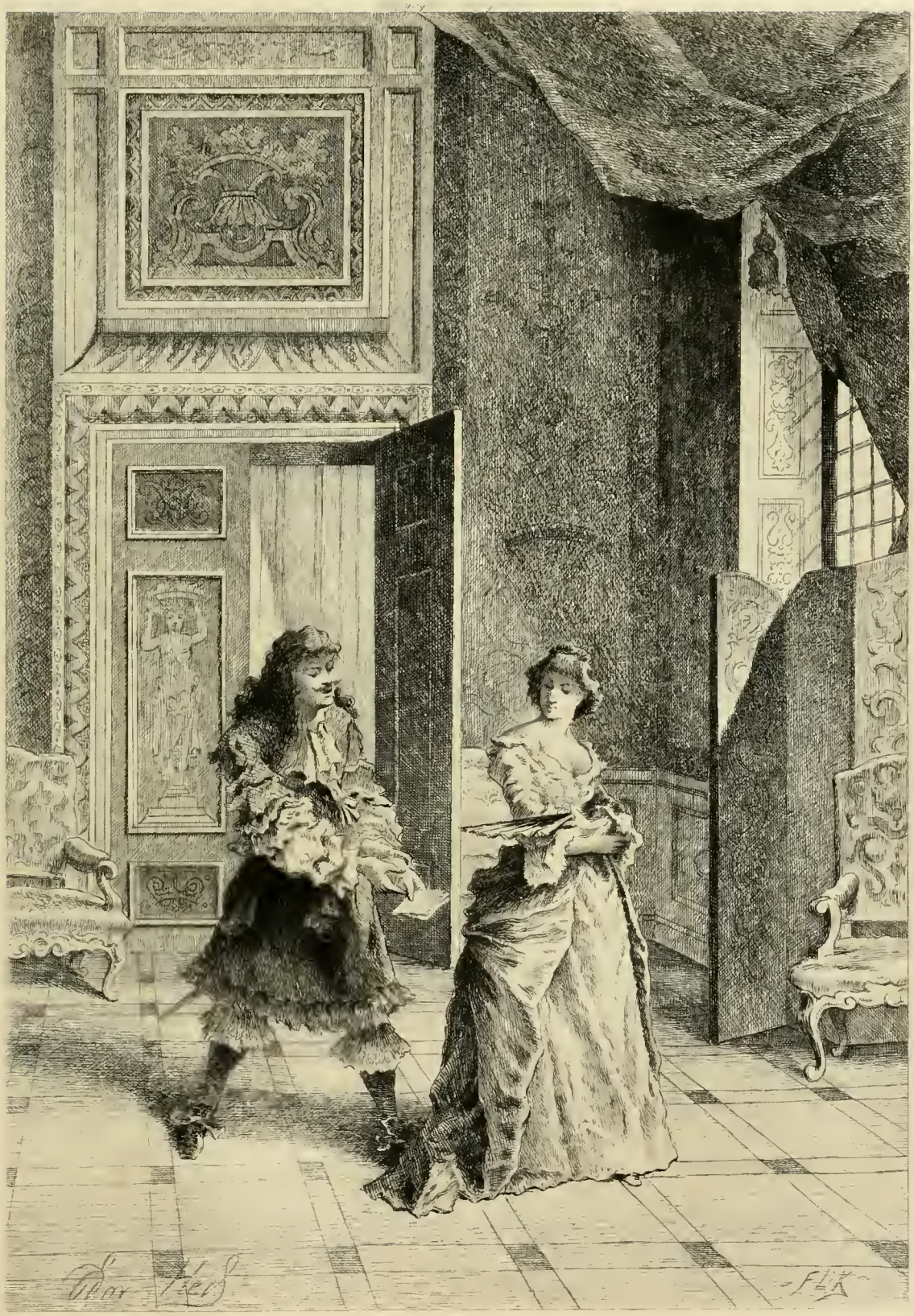


kill me, are no longer governed by reason; I give way to the outbursts of a just wrath, and am no longer responsible for what I may do.

CEL. Whence comes, I pray, such a passion? Speak! Have you lost your senses?

ALC. Yes, yes, I lost them when, to my misfortune, I beheld you, and thus took the poison which kills me, and when I thought to meet with some sincerity in those treacherous charms that bewitched me.

CEL. Of what treachery have you to complain?

ALC. Ah! how double-faced she is! how well she knows how to dissemble! But I am fully prepared with the means of driving her to extremities. Cast your eyes here and recognize your writing. This picked-up note is sufficient to confound you, and such proof cannot easily be refuted.

CEL. And this is the cause of your perturbation of spirits?

ALC. You do not blush on beholding this writing!

CEL. And why should I blush?

ALC. What! You add boldness to craft! Will you disown this note because it bears no name?

CEL. Why should I disown it, since I wrote it?[26]

ALC. And you can look at it without becoming confused at the crime of which its style accuses you!

CEL. You are, in truth, a very eccentric man.

ALC. What! you thus out-brave this convincing proof! And the contents, so full of tenderness for Oronte, need have nothing in them to outrage me, or to shame you?

CEL. Oronte! Who told you this letter is for him?

ALC. The people who put it into my hands this day. But I will even suppose that it is for someone else. Has my heart any less cause to complain of yours? Will you, in fact, be less guilty toward me?

CEL. But if it is a woman to whom this letter is addressed, how can it hurt you, or what is there culpable in it?

ALC. Hem! The prevarication is ingenious, and the excuse excellent. I must own that I did not expect this turn; and nothing but that was wanting to convince me. Do you dare to have recourse to such palpable tricks? Do you think people entirely destitute of common sense? Come, let us see a little by what subterfuge, with what air, you will support so palpable a falsehood; and how you can apply to a woman every word of this note which evinces so much tenderness! Reconcile, if you can, to hide your deceit, what I am about to read . . .

CEL. It does not suit me to do so. I think it ridiculous that you should take so much upon yourself, and tell me to my face what you have the daring to say to me!

ALC. No, no, without flying into a rage, take a little trouble to explain these terms.

CEL. No, I shall do nothing of the kind, and it matters very little to me what you think upon the subject.

ALC. I pray you, show me, and I shall be satisfied, if this letter can be explained as meant for a woman.

CEL. Not at all. It is for Oronte; and I will have you believe it. I accept all his attentions gladly; I admire what he says, I like him, and I shall agree to whatever you

please. Do as you like, and act as you think proper; let nothing hinder you and do not harass me any longer.

ALC. (*Aside.*) Heavens! can anything more cruel be conceived, and was ever heart treated like mine? What! I am justly angry with her, I come to complain, and I am quarreled with instead! My grief and my suspicions are excited to the utmost, I am allowed to believe everything, she boasts of everything; and yet, my heart is still sufficiently mean not to be able to break the bonds that hold it fast, and not to arm itself with a generous contempt for the ungrateful object of which it is too much enamored. (*To Célimène.*) Perfidious woman, you know well how to take advantage against myself of my great weakness, and to employ for your own purpose that excessive, astonishing, and fatal love which your treacherous looks have inspired![27] Defend yourself at least from a crime that overwhelms even me, and cease that affectation of being culpable against me. Show me, if you can, the innocence of this note; my affection will even consent to assist you. At any rate, endeavor to appear faithful, and I shall strive to believe you such.

CEL. Bah, you are mad with your jealous frenzies, and do not deserve the love which I have for you. I should much like to know what could compel me to stoop for you to the baseness of dissembling; and why, if my heart were disposed towards another, I should not say so candidly. What! does the kind assurance of my sentiments towards you not defend me sufficiently against all your suspicions? Ought they to possess any weight at all with such a guarantee? Is it not insulting me even to listen to them? And since it is with the utmost difficulty that we can resolve to confess our love, since the strict honor of our sex, hostile to our passion, strongly opposes such a confession, ought a lover who sees such an obstacle overcome for his sake, doubt with impunity our avowal? And is he not greatly to blame in not assuring himself of the truth of that which is never said but after a severe struggle with one's self?[28] Begone, such suspicions deserve my anger, and you are not worthy of being cared for. I am silly, and am vexed at my own simplicity in still preserving the least kindness for you. I ought to place my affections elsewhere, and give you a just cause for complaint.

ALC. Ah! you traitress! mine is a strange infatuation for you! those tender expressions are, no doubt, meant only to deceive me. But it matters little, I must submit to my fate; my very soul is wrapt up in you; I will see to the bitter end how your heart will act towards me, and whether it will be black enough to deceive me.

CEL. No, you do not love me as you ought to love.

ALC. Indeed! Nothing is to be compared to my exceeding love; and, in its eagerness to show itself to the whole world, it goes even so far as to form wishes against you. Yes, I could wish that no one thought you handsome, that you were reduced to a miserable existence; that Heaven, at your birth, had bestowed upon you nothing; that you had no rank, no nobility, no wealth, so that I might openly proffer my heart, and thus make amends to you for the injustice of such a lot; and that, this very day, I might have the joy and the glory of seeing you owe everything to my love.[29]

CEL. This is wishing me well in a strange way![30] Heaven grant that you may never

have occasion . . . But here comes Monsieur Dubois curiously decked out.

SCENE IV. — CELIMENE, ALCESTE, DUBOIS.

ALC. What means this strange attire, and that frightened look? What ails you?

DU. Sir . . .

ALC. Well?

DU. The most mysterious event.

ALC. What is it?

DU. Our affairs are turning out badly, sir.

ALC. What?

DU. Shall I speak out?

ALC. Yes, do, and quickly.

DU. Is there no one there?

ALC. Curse your trifling! Will you speak?

DU. Sir, we must beat a retreat.

ALC. What do you mean?

DU. We must steal away from this quietly.

ALC. And why?

DU. I tell you that we must leave this place.

ALC. The reason?

DU. You must go, sir, without staying to take leave.

ALC. But what is the meaning of this strain?

DU. The meaning is, sir, that you must make yourself scarce.

ALC. I shall knock you on the head to a certainty, booby, if you do not explain yourself more clearly.

DU. A fellow, sir, with a black dress, and as black a look, got as far as the kitchen to leave a paper with us, scribbled over in such a fashion that old Nick himself could not have read it. It is about your lawsuit, I make no doubt; but the very devil, I believe, could not make head nor tail of it.

ALC. Well! what then? What has the paper to do with the going away of which you speak, you scoundrel?

DU. I must tell you, sir, that, about an hour afterwards, a gentleman who often calls, came to ask for you quite eagerly, and not finding you at home, quietly told me, knowing how attached I am to you, to let you know . . . Stop a moment, what the deuce is his name?

ALC. Never mind his name, you scoundrel, and tell me what he told you.

DU. He is one of your friends, in short, that is sufficient. He told me that for your very life you must get away from this, and that you are threatened with arrest.

ALC. But how! has he not specified anything?

DU. No. He asked me for ink and paper, and has sent you a line from which you can, I think, fathom the mystery!

ALC. Hand it over then.

CEL. What can all this mean?

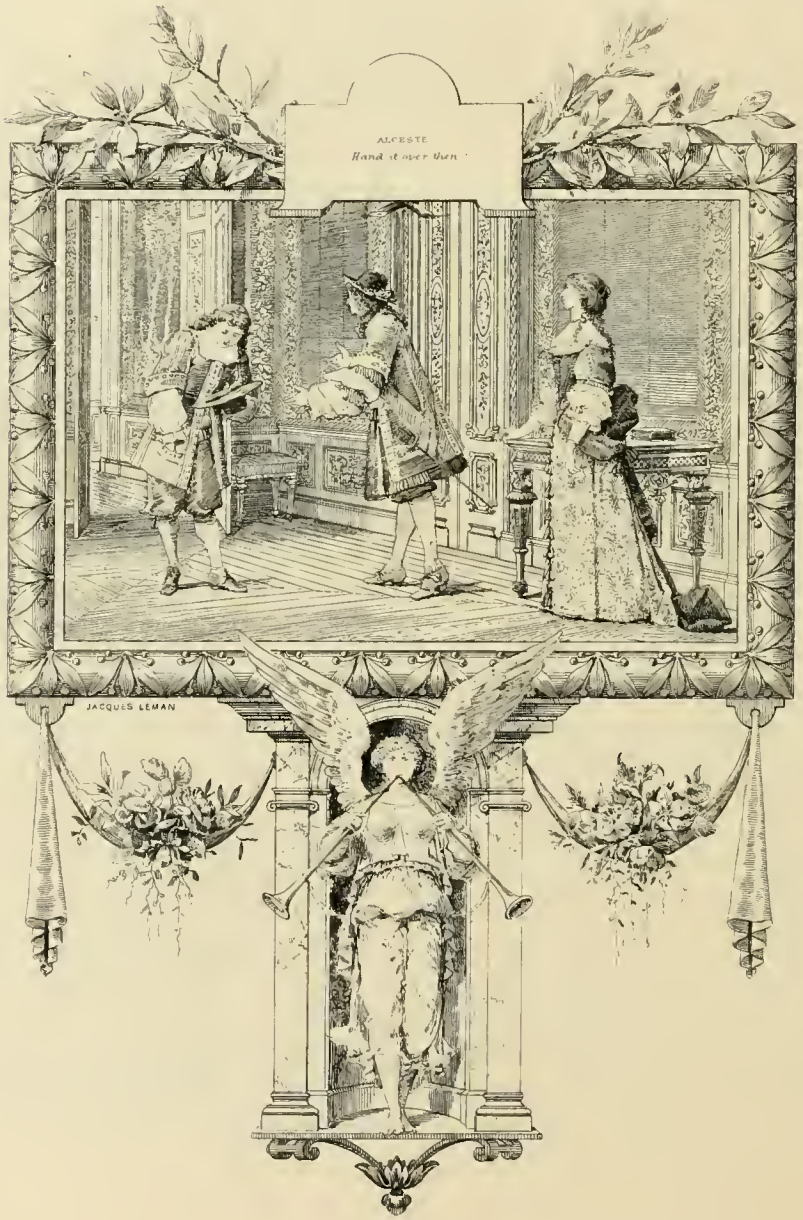
ALC. I do not know; but I am anxious to be informed. Have you almost done, devil take you?

DU. (*After having fumbled for some time for the note.*) After all, sir, I have left it on your table.

ALC. I do not know what keeps me from . . .

CEL. Do not put yourself in a passion, but go and unravel this perplexing business.

ALC. It seems that fate, whatever I may do, has sworn to prevent my having a conversation with you. But, to get the better of her, allow me to see you again, madam, before the end of the day.



ACT V.

SCENE I.—ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

ALC. I tell you, my mind is made up about it.

PHIL. But, whatever this blow may be, does it compel you . . .

ALC. You may talk and argue till doomsday if you like, nothing can avert me from what I have said. The age we live in is too perverse, and I am determined to withdraw altogether from intercourse with the world. What! when honor, probity, decency, and the laws, are all against my adversary; when the equity of my claim is everywhere cried up; when my mind is at rest as to the justice of my cause, I meanwhile see myself betrayed by its issue! What! I have got justice on my side, and I lose my case! A wretch, whose scandalous history is well known, comes off triumphant by the blackest falsehood! All good faith yields to his treachery! He finds the means of being in the right, whilst cutting my throat! The weight of his dissimulation, so full of cunning, overthrows the right and turns the scales of justice! He

obtains even a decree of court to crown his villainy. And, not content with the wrong he is doing me, there is abroad in society an abominable book, of which the very reading is to be condemned, a book that deserves the utmost severity, and of which the scoundrel has the impudence to proclaim me the author.[31] Upon this, Oronte is observed to mutter, and tries wickedly to support the imposture! He, who holds an honorable position at court, to whom I have done nothing except having been sincere and candid, who came to ask me in spite of myself of my opinion of some of his verses; and because I treat him honestly, and will not betray either him or truth, he assists in overwhelming me with a trumped-up crime. Behold him now my greatest enemy! And I shall never obtain his sincere forgiveness, because I did not think that his sonnet was good! 'Sdeath! to think that mankind is made thus! The thirst for fame induces them to do such things! This is the good faith, the virtuous zeal, the justice and the honor to be found amongst them! Let us begone; it is too much to endure the vexations they are devising; let us get out of this wood, this cut-throat hole; and since men behave towards each other like real wolves, wretches, you shall never see me again as long as I live.

PHIL. I think you are acting somewhat hastily; and the harm done is not so great as you would make it out. Whatever your adversary dares to impute to you has not had the effect of causing you to be arrested. We see his false reports defeating themselves, and this action is likely to hurt him much more than you.

ALC. Him? he does not mind the scandal of such tricks as these. He has a license to be an arrant knave; and this event, far from damaging his position, will obtain him a still better standing to-morrow.

PHIL. In short, it is certain that little notice has been taken of the report which his malice spread against you;[32] from that side you have already nothing to fear; and as for your lawsuit, of which you certainly have reason to complain, it is easy for you to bring the trial on afresh, and against this decision . . .

ALC. No, I shall leave it as it is. Whatever cruel wrong this verdict may inflict, I shall take particular care not to have it set aside. We see too plainly how right is maltreated in it, and I wish it to go down to posterity as a signal proof, as a notorious testimony of the wickedness of the men of our age. It may indeed cost me twenty thousand francs, but at the cost of twenty thousand francs I shall have the right of railing against the iniquity of human nature, and of nourishing an undying hatred of it.

PHIL. But after all . . .

ALC. But after all, your pains are thrown away. What can you, sir, say upon this head? Would you have the assurance to wish, to my face, to excuse the villainy of all that is happening?

PHIL. No, I agree with you in all that you say. Everything goes by intrigue, and by pure influence. It is only trickery which carries the day in our time, and men ought to act differently. But is their want of equity a reason for wishing to withdraw from their society? All human failings give us, in life, the means of exercising our philosophy. It is the best employment for virtue; and if probity reigned everywhere, if all hearts were candid, just, and tractable, most of our virtues would be useless to us, inasmuch as their functions are to bear, without annoyance, the

injustice of others in our good cause; and just in the same way as a heart full of virtue . . .

ALC. I know that you are a most fluent speaker, sir; that you always abound in fine arguments; but you are wasting your time, and all your fine speeches. Reason tells me to retire for my own good. I cannot command my tongue sufficiently; I cannot answer for what I might say, and should very probably get myself into a hundred scrapes. Allow me, without any more words, to wait for Célimène. She must consent to the plan that brings me here. I shall see whether her heart has any love for me; and this very hour will prove it to me.

PHIL. Let us go upstairs to Eliante, and wait her coming.

ALC. No, my mind is too harassed. You go and see her, and leave me in this little dark corner with my black care.

PHIL. That is strange company to leave you in; I will induce Eliante to come down.

SCENE II.—CELIMENE, ORONTE, ALCESTE.

ORON. Yes, madam, it remains for you to consider whether, by ties so dear, you will make me wholly yours, I must be absolutely certain of your affection: a lover dislikes to be held in suspense upon such a subject. If the ardor of my affection has been able to move your feelings, you ought not to hesitate to let me see it; and the proof, after all, which I ask of you, is not to allow Alceste to wait upon you any longer; to sacrifice him to my love, and, in short, to banish him from your house this very day.

CEL. But why are you so incensed against him; you, whom I have so often heard speak of his merits?

ORON. There is no need, madam, of these explanations; the question is, what are your feelings? Please to choose between the one or the other; my resolution depends entirely upon yours.

ALC. (*Coming out of his corner.*) Yes, this gentleman is right, madam, you must make a choice; and his request agrees perfectly with mine. I am equally eager, and the same anxiety brings me here. My love requires a sure proof. Things cannot go on any longer in this way, and the moment has arrived for explaining your feelings.

ORON. I have no wish, sir, in any way to disturb, by an untimely affection, your good fortune.

ALC. And I have no wish, sir, jealous or not jealous, to share aught in her heart with you.

ORON. If she prefers your affection to mine . . .

ALC. If she has the slightest inclination towards you . . .

ORON. I swear henceforth not to pretend to it again.

ALC. I peremptorily swear never to see her again.

ORON. Madam, it remains with you now to speak openly.

ALC. Madam, you can explain yourself fearlessly.

ORON. You have simply to tell us where your feelings are engaged.

ALC. You may simply finish the matter, by choosing between us two.

ORON. What! you seem to be at a loss to make such a choice.

ALC. What! your heart still wavers, and appears uncertain!

CEL. Good heavens, how out of place is this persistence, and how very unreasonable you both show yourselves! It is not that I do not know whom to prefer, nor is it my heart that wavers. It is not at all in doubt between you two; and nothing could be more quickly accomplished than the choice of my affections. But to tell the truth, I feel too confused to pronounce such an avowal before you; I think that disobliging words ought not to be spoken in people's presence; that a heart can give sufficient proof of its attachment without going so far as to break with everyone; and gentler intimations suffice to inform a lover of the ill success of his suit.

ORON. No, no, I do not fear a frank avowal; for my part I consent to it.

ALC. And I demand it; it is just its very publicity that I claim, and I do not wish you to spare my feelings in the least. Your great study has always been to keep friends with everyone; but no more trifling, no more uncertainty. You must explain yourself clearly, or I shall take your refusal as a verdict; I shall know, for my part, how to interpret your silence, and shall consider it as a confirmation of the worst.

ORON. I owe you many thanks, sir, for this wrath, and I say in every respect as you do.

CEL. How you weary me with such a whim! Is there any justice in what you ask? And have I not told you what motive prevents me? I will be judged by Eliante, who is just coming.

SCENE III.—ELIANTE, PHILINTE, CELIMENE, ORONTE, ALCESTE.

CEL. Good cousin, I am being persecuted here by people who have concerted to do so. They both demand, with the same warmth, that I should declare whom my heart has chosen, and that, by a decision which I must give before their very faces, I should forbid one of them to tease me any more with his attentions. Say, has ever such a thing been done?

EL. Pray, do not consult me upon such a matter. You may perhaps address yourself to a wrong person, for I am decidedly for people who speak their mind.

ORON. Madam, it is useless for you to decline.

ALC. All your evasions here will be badly supported.

ORON. You must speak, you must, and no longer waver.

ALC. You need do no more than remain silent.

ORON. I desire but one word to end our discussions.

ALC. To me your silence will convey as much as speech.

SCENE IV.—ARSINOE, CELIMENE, ELIANTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE, ACASTE, CLITANDRE, ORONTE.

AC. (*To Célimène.*) We have both come, by your leave, madam, to clear up a certain little matter with you.

CL. (*To Oronte and Alceste.*) Your presence happens fortunately, gentlemen; for this affair concerns you also.

ARS. (*To Célimène.*) No doubt you are surprised at seeing me here, madam; but these gentlemen are the cause of my intrusion. They both came to see me, and complained of a proceeding which I could not have credited. I have too high an opinion of your kindness of heart ever to believe you capable of such a crime; my eyes even have refused to give credence to their strongest proofs, and in my friendship, forgetting trivial disagreements, I have been induced to accompany them here, to hear you refute this slander.

AC. Yes, madam, let us see, with composure, how you will manage to bear this out. This letter has been written by you, to Clitandre.

CL. And this tender epistle you have addressed to Acaste.

AC. (*To Oronte and Alceste.*) This writing is not altogether unknown to you, gentlemen, and I have no doubt that her kindness has before now made you familiar with her hand. But this is well worth the trouble of reading.[33]

"*You are a strange man to condemn my liveliness of spirits, and to reproach me that I am never so merry as when I am with you. Nothing could be more unjust; and if you do not come very soon to ask my pardon for this offense, I shall never forgive you as long as I live. Our great hulking booby of a viscount.*"[34] He ought to have been here. "*Our great hulking booby of a viscount, with whom you begin your complaints, is a man who would not at all suit me; and ever since I watched him for full three-quarters of an hour spitting in a well to make circles in the water, I never could have a good opinion of him. As for the little marquis . . .*" that is myself, ladies and gentlemen, be it said without the slightest vanity . . . "*As for the little marquis, who held my hand yesterday for a long while, I think that there is nothing so diminutive as his whole person, and his sole merit consists in his cloak and sword. As to the man with the green shoulder knot.*"[35] (*To Alceste.*) It is your turn now, sir. "*As to the man with the green shoulder knot, he amuses me sometimes with his bluntness and his splenetic behavior; but there are hundreds of times when I think him the greatest bore in the world. Respecting the man with the big waistcoat . . .*"[36] (*To Oronte.*) This is your share. "*Respecting the man with the big waistcoat, who has thought fit to set up as a wit, and wishes to be an author in spite of everyone, I cannot even take the trouble to listen to what he says; and his prose bores me just as his poetry. Take it then for granted that I do not always enjoy myself so much as you think; and that I wish for you, more than I care to say, amongst all the entertainments to which I am dragged; and that the presence of those we love is an excellent relish to our pleasures.*"

CL. Now for myself.

"*Your Clitandre, whom you mention to me, and who has always such a quantity of soft expressions at his command, is the last man for whom I could feel any affection. He must be crazed in persuading himself that I love him; and you are so too in believing that I do not love you. You had better change your fancies for his, and come and see me as often as you can, to help me in bearing the annoyance of being pestered by him.*" This shows the model of a lovely character, madam; and I need not tell you what to call it. It is enough. We shall, both of us, show this admirable sketch of your heart everywhere and to everybody.

Ac. I might also say something, and the subject is tempting; but I deem you beneath my anger; and I will show you that little marquises can find worthier hearts than yours to console themselves.

SCENE V.—Celimene, Eliante, Arsinoe, Alceste, Oronte, Philinte.

Oron. What! Am I to be pulled to pieces in this fashion, after all that you have written to me? And does your heart, with all its semblance of love, plight its faith to all mankind by turns! Bah, I have been too great a dupe, but I shall be so no longer. You have done me a service in showing yourself in your true colors to me. I am the richer by a heart which you thus restore to me, and find my revenge in your loss. (*To Alceste.*) Sir, I shall no longer be an obstacle to your flame, and you may settle matters with this lady as soon as you please.

SCENE VI.—Celimene, Eliante, Arsinoe, Alceste, Philinte.

Ars. (*To Célimène.*) This is certainly one of the basest actions which I have ever seen; I can no longer be silent, and feel quite upset. Has anyone ever seen the like of it? I do not concern myself much in the affairs of other people, but this gentleman (*pointing to Alceste*), who has staked the whole of his happiness on you, an honorable and deserving man like this, and who worshiped you to madness, ought he to have been . . .

Al. Leave me, I pray you, madam, to manage my own affairs; and do not trouble yourself unnecessarily. In vain do I see you espouse my quarrel. I am unable to repay you for this great zeal; and if ever I intended to avenge myself by choosing someone else, it would not be you whom I would select.

Ars. And do you imagine, sir, that I ever harbored such a thought, and that I am so very anxious to secure you? You must be very vain, indeed, to flatter yourself with such an idea. Célimène's leavings are a commodity of which no one needs to be so very much enamored. Pray, undeceive yourself, and do not carry matters with so high a hand. People like me are not for such as you. You will do much better to remain dangling after her skirts, and I long to see so beautiful a match.

SCENE VII.—Celimene, Eliante, Alceste, Philinte.

Al. (*To Célimène.*) Well! I have held my tongue, notwithstanding all I have seen, and I have let everyone have his say before me. Have I controlled myself long enough? and will you now allow me . . .

Cel. Yes, you may say what you like; you are justified when you complain, and you may

reproach me with anything you please. I confess that I am in the wrong; and overwhelmed by confusion I do not seek by any idle excuse to palliate my fault. The anger of the others I have despised; but I admit my guilt towards you. No doubt, your resentment is just; I know how culpable I must appear to you, that everything speaks of my treachery to you, and that, in short, you have cause to hate me. Do so, I consent to it.

ALC. But can I do so, you traitress? Can I thus get the better of all my tenderness for you? And although I wish to hate you with all my soul, shall I find a heart quite ready to obey me? (*To Eliante and Philinte.*) You see what an unworthy passion can do, and I call you both as witnesses of my infatuation. Nor, truth to say, is this all, and you will see me carry it out to the bitter end, to show you that it is wrong to call us wise, and that in all hearts there remains still something of the man. (*To Célimène.*) Yes, perfidious creature, I am willing to forget your crimes. I can find, in my own heart, an excuse for all your doings, and hide them under the name of a weakness into which the vices of the age betrayed your youth, provided your heart will second the design which I have formed of avoiding all human creatures, and that you are determined to follow me without delay into the solitude in which I have made a vow to pass my days. It is by that only, that, in every one's opinion, you can repair the harm done by your letters, and that, after the scandal which every noble heart must abhor, it may still be possible for me to love you.

CEL. What! I renounce the world before I grow old, and bury myself in your wilderness!

ALC. If your affection responds to mine what need the rest of the world signify to you? Am I not sufficient for you?

CEL. Solitude is frightful to a widow of twenty.[37] I do not feel my mind sufficiently grand and strong to resolve to adopt such a plan. If the gift of my hand can satisfy your wishes, I might be induced to tie such bonds; and marriage . . .

ALC. No. My heart loathes you now, and this refusal alone effects more than all the rest. As you are not disposed, in those sweet ties, to find all in all in me, as I would find all in all in you, begone, I refuse your offer, and this much-felt outrage frees me forever from your unworthy toils.

SCENE VIII.—ELIANTE, ALCESTE, PHILINTE.

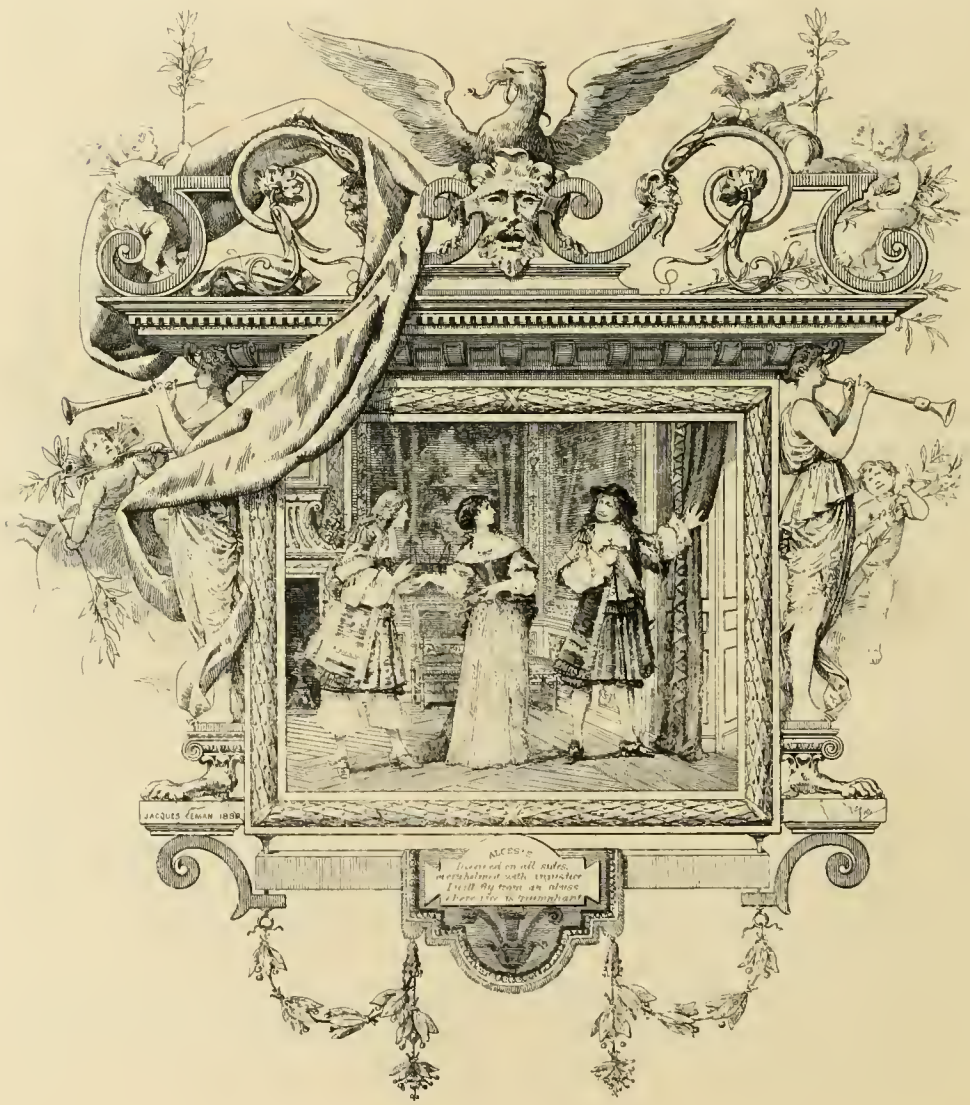
ALC. (*To Eliante.*) Madam, your beauty is adorned by a hundred virtues; and I never saw anything in you but what was sincere. For a long while I thought very highly of you; but allow me to esteem you thus forever, and suffer my heart in its various troubles not to offer itself for the honor of your acceptance. I feel too unworthy, and begin to perceive that Heaven did not intend me for the marriage bond; that the homage of only the remainder of a heart unworthy of you, would be below your merit, and that in short . . .

EL. You may pursue this thought. I am not at all embarrassed with my hand; and here is your friend, who, without giving me much trouble, might possibly accept it if I asked him.

PHIL. Ah! Madam, I ask for nothing better than that honor, and I could sacrifice my life and soul for it.

ALC. May you, to taste true contentment, preserve forever these feelings towards each other! Deceived on all sides, overwhelmed with injustice, I will fly from an abyss where vice is triumphant, and seek out some small secluded nook on earth, where one may enjoy the freedom of being an honest man.

PHIL. Come, madam, let us leave nothing untried to deter him from the design on which his heart is set.



NOTES

[1] This part was played by Molière himself. In the inventory taken after Molière's death, and given by M. E. Soulié in the *Recherches sur Molière*, we find the dress for the representation of *The Misanthrope*, consisting of breeches and jacket of a gold-colored and gray striped brocade, lined with tabby, ornamented with green ribands; the waistcoat of gold brocade, silk stockings and gaiters.

[2] The *marechaussée* was a kind of mounted police, doing formerly the same duty as the gendarmerie does now. It was commanded by a *prévôt-général*, under the orders of the marshals of France.

[3] Compare St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, xii. 3, "Not to think more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly."

[4] Compare the supposed conversation between Molière and Chapelle in the Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*.

[5] The original has *l'amitié demande un peu plus de mystère*, friendship demands a little more mystery. I imagine this to be an allusion to the mystery of religion. Hence the idea of sacredness; for otherwise it is unintelligible why friendship should demand mystery.

[6] One of the commentators of Molière, Aimé-Martin, thinks that the praises which Philinte bestows on Oronte's sonnet prove his kind feeling. I think the saying, "I never heard verses more skillfully turned," proves more than this.

[7] The *rhingrave* was a large pair of breeches, introduced into France by a certain Count von Salm, who was called the *Rheingraf*.

[8] Compare with this what Molière says in *The Impromptu of Versailles*, Scene III., when he reprimands La Grange. "That is not the way in which marquises talk. It must be a little higher. Most of these gentlemen affect a special tone to distinguish themselves from the vulgar."

[9] It has been justly remarked by Génin, that Racine, who until then had treated love in *La Thébaïde*, and *Alexandre*, as a heroic passion, was taught, probably by *The Misanthrope*, to treat that passion in a natural manner; for thus he displays it in *Andromaque*, which appeared a year after Molière's play.

[10] Whilst this "aside" is going on between Alceste and Célimène, all the other persons have taken seats on the stage in a semicircle, facing the spectators. After they have been thus settled, Clitandre begins the conversation; Alceste has a chair on the extreme right, rather at the background.

[11] It is odd that English authorities pretend that Sedan chairs were introduced from France. D'Israëli, in his *Curiosities of Literature*, states that the Duke of Buckingham introduced Sedan chairs into England; Hone, in *The Every-Day Book*, Vol. II., p. 902, says in a note: "Sedan chairs were first introduced into England in 1634. The first was used by the Duke of Buckingham, to the indignation of the people, who exclaimed, that he was employing his fellow-creatures to do the services of beasts." According to a note of M. E. Despois in the *Précieuses Ridicules*, it was the Marquis de Montbrun who first introduced the covered Sedan chairs from England into France.

[12] This passage has been applied by Molière's contemporaries to the Duke de Montausier. It is said that this nobleman was one day walking with a friend near the Tuileries, when the latter remarked how foolish Renard, the proprietor of some gardens close by, was to allow the public to enter there, instead of keeping them only for himself and his friends. The Duke replied that Renard could not do better than receive respectable people in his grounds, and proved this convincingly. On the next day, being by accident in the same neighborhood, Montausier's friend observed how praiseworthy it was in Renard to allow good company to enter his grounds; but the Duke replied, that only a madman could spoil his own and his friends' pleasures, in order to allow all the idlers of the court and town to saunter there. It is said that Ménage related this anecdote.

[13] I have already said that Grimarest stated that Molière had prepared a translation of Lucretius in verse; and that he intended to read part of it at an evening party given at the house of M. du Broussin, in 1664, but did not think his verses worthy of coming after those of Boileau, who read before him. All this rests upon very

slight tradition; the only traces of Lucretius in Molière's works are a few lines of *The Citizen who apes the Nobleman*, and the above passage.

[14] The original has *petit couche*.

[15] The dress of the guards of the marechaussée, was something like that of the "buffetiers" of the Tower of London; hence the allusion to "the plaited skirts." The *maréchaux de France* formed a tribunal, which inquired into affairs of honor among noblemen or officers. The *garde de la connétablie* was under its orders, and made the offended parties appear before the tribunal of the marechaussée, who settled the reparation to be given. See note 2.

[16] Tradition pretends that when Boileau was told that Colbert was very intimate with Chapelain, that even the king liked the latter's poem *La Pucelle*, and that therefore the first-mentioned should be more careful in his criticisms, he exclaimed, "The King and M. Colbert may do what they please, but unless his Majesty expressly commands me to consider the verses of M. Chapelain good, I shall always maintain that a man, after having written such a poem, deserves to be hanged."

[17] One of the commentators of Molière, M. Auger, has justly observed how admirably Célimène and Arsinoé vent their malignity, under the pretext of doing their duty as friends. Both are equally bad, both hate and insult each other; but yet, although their feelings and situations are the same, Molière shows with a master hand the difference between them. The prude Arsinoé is bitter and angry in her speech; the coquette Célimène jocular and calm; the first, by getting in a rage, is wholly off her guard, and exposes herself to the most terrible blows; the second, keeping cool, preserves all her advantages, and makes the best possible use of them. The reason of it is that the one is of a certain age, and of uncertain charms, whilst the other is in the flower of her youth and beauty; the one is a hypocrite, whose mask has been snatched off; the other is a rather impudent young woman, whose faults are obvious.

[18] The only newspaper then (1666) known was the official *Gazette de France*, established by Renandot in 1631; Denis de Sallo founded, in 1665, a literary and scientific paper, called *le Journal des Savants*. As the news given by the *Gazette* was very meagre, there arose the *gazettes secrètes*, which were rigorously prosecuted, and, if possible, suppressed, and the authors, if got hold of, publicly flagellated and imprisoned.—Compare Byron's line in *Don Juan*, "And even my servant's put in the Gazette."

[19] This is, I believe, the only direct attack Molière ever made against the court, and by so doing, he ran the risk of offending Louis XIV. Part of this outbreak may be found in Juvenal, and also one of Boileau's satires.

[20] The original has a bad play on words, or rather on the antithesis of thought as shown in the sentence: *je vous ferai voir une preuve fidèle, de l'infidélité du cœur de votre belle*. This was quite in the taste of the times, though happily no longer so.

[21] See note 16. This passage reminds me of a nearly similar one in the ninth satire of Boileau, in which he says of Chapelain—

> Let aye his honesty and his fair name be praised;
> His candor and civility be highly valued;
> Let him be gentle, pliant, upright, o'er-polite;
> Amen, I say to this, not one word will I utter.
> But when they say his writings are the very best,
> When he's the amplest paid of all the wits in town,
> When they declare him king of all the author's tribe,
> Then I'm quite in a rage, anxious to scribble too.

[22] The word "sympathy" was then used to express in an elegant manner the feeling of love.

[23] The words from "What ails you" till "faithless," are, with some slight alterations, taken from *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act IV., Scene 7.

[24] These words, from "That all" till "you are," are also in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act IV., Scene 8, Vol. I.

[25] The whole of Alceste's speech, from "Blush rather" until "mad with rage," is, with some slight alterations, taken from *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act IV., Scene 8.

[26] The words "Whence comes I pray" until "since I wrote it," are, with some slight alterations, taken from *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act II., Scene 5.

[27] The phrase "Perfidious woman" until "inspired," is, with few alterations, to be found in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act IV., Scene 8.

[28] The words "And since it is" until "with one's self," are found, with some slight alterations, in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act III., Scene 1.

[29] The words "so that" until "love" are, with some alterations, found also in *Don Garcia of Navarre*, Act I., Scene 3.

[30] It has been said that Molière has reproduced an incident of his own life, when his wife, out of despair that her love for the Count of Guiche was not returned, threw herself into the arms of the Duke of Lauzun, and that the *liaison* was betrayed to Molière by the Abbé de Richelieu; that when Molière reproached his wife with her conduct, she answered that she was guilty only of thoughtlessness, and begged his pardon; that he forgave her; that for some time they lived happily together; but that, on her return to Paris, she broke out again. For all these and similar stories, there is no other foundation than the well-known pamphlet, *La Fameuse comédienne*. (See Introductory Notice to *The Impromptu of Versailles*.)

[31] According to Grimarest, there was at that time secretly in circulation "a terrible book," published under Molière's name. Of course it was said that his opponents, very angry at the *Tartuffe*, were the authors of it: hence the allusion.

[32] These words of Philinte may perhaps vaguely refer to the accusation brought by Montfleury against Molière in 1663. (See Prefatory Memoir.)

[33] Acaste reads the letter written to Clitandre; and Clitandre, the one written to Acaste.

[34] It has been said that the "great hulking booby of a viscount" was intended for the Count de Guiche, and that Madam, the wife of Louis XIV.'s brother, whose Chevalier he was, wished the description to be omitted, but that the king told Molière to leave it in. All this appears to be mere gossip, unsupported by anything.

[35] In note 1, we find that Molière, on playing the part of Alceste, wore a dress "ornamented with green ribands;" hence the allusion to "the green shoulder knot."

[36] Oronte wore a big waistcoat (*veste*) to distinguish himself from the other personages. But afterwards everyone wore such a waistcoat; and La Grange and Vinot, the editors of the first collected edition of Molière's works, finding that this no longer distinguished Oronte, called him *l'homme au sonnet*, the sonneteer.

[37] It would be against all the traditions of the French stage to let a respectable unmarried young lady be visited by gentlemen: hence Alceste says (Act I., Scene 1, page 33), that "Célimène is a young widow." Arsinoé also would not have given vent to her insinuations if this had not been the case.

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